10 Jun

# PIC STATE OF STATE OF

17 18 18 19

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

#### SWEET SCIENCE

Tyson & Ali face off in Fight Night Round 4!

VERDICT!

#### RESIDENT

### **EVIL** 5

Gonna blast the brains down in Africa!

10 THINGS that you must do in Skate 2! CLAWS & EFFECT

Wolverine: bigger, bloodier, believe it!

GOD OF WAR III

New screens: Let slip the gods of gore!

AUS \$14.95 NZ \$16.95 inc GST

9 771834 380002

PRINT POST APPROVED PP255003/06871

MUST READ EXCLUSIVE!

## WOLFENSTEIN

The triumphant return of the shooter that started them all!

Kelly **HU** 

SAMUEL L. **JACKSON** 

PERLMAN



AFTO SAMULA THE VIDEOGAME



**NOTHING PERSONAL.** IT'S JUST REVENGE.

Preorder now at 38 GAIMLES and receive an exclusive Afro Samurai headband\*







## 

TIPS & TRICKS
Check out our list of the top 10 things you have to do in Skate

2. You can't afford to miss out

March 2009 Issue 28

#### **INSIDER**

10 News

All the latest info!

12 Screentest Plus Separated at Birth!

13 Where To Now?

What now for Resident Evil?

14 Top Ten

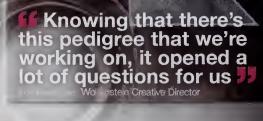
The greatest cars!

16 Around the World International news nuggets

17 Release Schedule

Plus Aussie charts!

18 Opinion



**50 WOLFENSTEIN** OPS Exclusive: The inside scoop on the return of a true classic!

#### ON THE COVER



#### **32 FNR4**

Going the distance!

#### **40 WOLVERINE**

Hands-on with the superhero slasher

#### 48 GOD OF WAR III

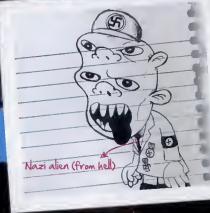
Kratos is back, and he's not happy

#### **66 RE5**

The horror heavyweight reviewed!

#### **90 SKATE 2**

10 things you must do!



SPECIAL FEATURE 6 HOW TO MAKE A BAD GAME

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4

The verdict on the latest addition to the Tom Clancy range. Does it fly like an eagle or crash and burn? Turn to page 70 and find out for yourself!

### PlayStation ® Official Magazine - Australia

#### **PREVIEWED**

#### **32 FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4**

We strap up and get in the ring with EA upcoming contender.

#### **36 BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM**

It's BioShock meets The Chronicles of Riddick, Rad.

#### 38 UFC 2009 UNDISPUTED

The real deal of fighting games. Hands-on

#### **39 BRÜTAL LEGEND**

It's back, and we've got fresh details and unseen screens.

#### **40 WOLVERINE**

Hands-on with the slash 'em up that's doing the X-Man justice.

#### **44 HEROES OVER EUROPE**

Iron eagles battle it out in the skies over Europe in gigantic multiplayer dogfights!

#### **45 GHOSTBUSTERS**

The cast of the classic comedies return for this brand-new jaunt.

#### **REGULARS**

**INsider** 

News, comedy and opinion

24

Your letters answered

36 **INcoming** 

Previews of future titles

65 **INreview** 

Verdicts for the latest games

82 **INtermission** 

Blu-ray, DVD and cinema

86 **INternet** 

PSN news, online reviews

90 **INsight** 

Essential tips & tricks

92 INdex

Your ultimate buyer's guide

96 **INfamous** 

Classics unearthed!

#### 46 CALL OF JUAREZ: **BOUND IN BLOOD**

The Wild Wild West just got wilder!

#### **48 GOD OF WAR III**

Kratos is back baby! Let slip the gods

#### **50 WOLFENSTEIN**

The full scoop on the Nazi-plugger to end all Nazi-pluggers.





#### REVIEWED

**66 RESIDENT EVIL 5** 

**70 TOM CLANCY'S HA** 

72 50 CENT: **BLOOD ON THE SAND** 

74 SILENT HILL:

**HOMECOMING** 

**76 SEGA MEGA RI** ULTIMATE COLLECTION

77 EAT LEAD: TH RETURN OF MAT HAZARD

**80 AFRO SAMU** RA

He's the best at what he does, but what he does isn't very nice!

WOLVERINE 40

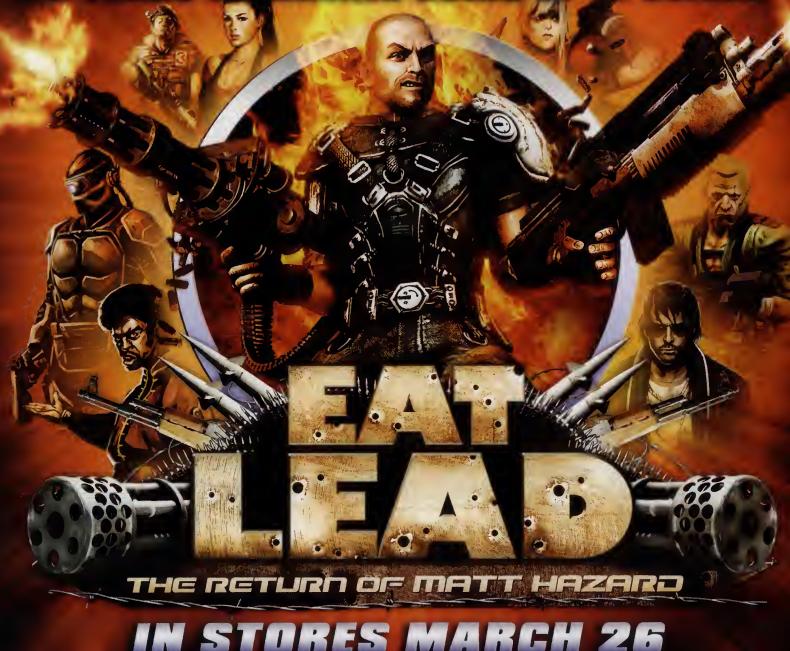


- Naruto DVD and manga
- Bond Blu-ray prize packs



SUBSCRIBE NOW! CALL 136 116 AND RECEIVE DEATH RACE ON BLU-RAY! SEE PAGE 30!

## EATTHAT FATBOY! 25 YEARS OF GAMING GOING UP IN SMOKE



IN STORES MARCH 26















PLAYETATION = XBOX 360 LIVE



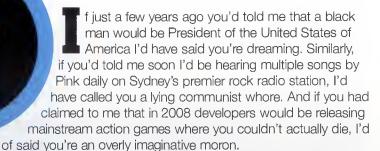




™ and ©2008-2009 D3Publisher of America. Inc. Published exclusively by D3Publisher worldwide. Eat Lead™: The Return of Matt Hazard and its associated characters and names, D3Publisher and its logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of D3Publisher of America. Inc. Developed by Vicious Cycle Software, Inc., a D3Publisher company.

Vicious Cycle Software, Inc. and Vicious Engine and their logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of Vicious Cycle Software, Inc. All rights reserved. "♣" and "PLAYSTATION" are trademarks or registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox 360. Xbox LIVE, and the Xbox logos are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies.





Of course, I would've looked like an idiot now, because today you could play *Prince* of *Persia* with Barack Obama while Pink bleats another shit tune on 104.9.

So I'm glad nobody told me any of this.

Point is, I remember a time where games weren't just tough, they were borderline impossible. I played *Driver* for months. I ruined a TV playing it. Seriously, I burnt that baby out. But I never finished it. Not without cheating, anyway. It was too hard. I'm fairly sure the only people who actually finished it properly were Terminators, or at least some kind of garden-variety cyborgs. Robots with machine-like reflexes and a love of the '70s.

Thing is, I'm not even that old – in the scheme of things. Are we in danger of breeding an entire generation of soft gamers?

Flat out, you can't die in *Prince of Persia*. How does that work? Want to know why games don't last as long these days? It's because they're too easy to breeze through. Adjustable difficulty levels help, but only with games that feature them. Are developers too afraid to kill players, for fear they'll stop playing? Maybe.

Who's wearing the pants now, then?



PSN: Capt\_Flashheart PLAYING: KILLZONE 2 WANTING: GRAN TURISMO 5

#### **OPS ON: HARD GAMES**



#### CAMILA MARCHIORETO

They don't come a lot harder than Street Fighter IV on hardest. I'm pretty certain Seth is actually unbeatable on the hardest difficulty.

PSN: TBA
Playing: Street Fighter IV
Wanting: Fight Night
Round 4



#### PAUL TAYLOR

Hardest game? That jigglethe-ball-on-a-string-in-tothe-cup game. Every time I pick up one of those I break out in a swearing fit and end up with sore jowls. Very un-gentlemanly.

PSN: paulgusta Playing: Killzone 2 Wanting: Singularity



#### JAMES COTTEE

They're all hard in their own ways. They're either too hard to play, or too hard to care about. There tend to be a few too many of the latter, actually. Wow, that sounded quite cynical.

PSN: DrWho3987 Playing: Valkyria Chronicles Wanting: Wolfenstein



#### JAMES ELLIS

This is a trick question, right? Surely we can't let the readers think we've been stumped by a game. I'm invincible! No game can stop me! No game, I say! BAHAHAHA!

PSN: gtfaster49 Playing: Street Fighter IV Wanting: Uncharted 2

### PlayStation® Official Magazine - Australia

#### **EDITORIAL & DESIGN**

EDITOR: Luke Reilly luke@derwenthoward.com.au DEPUTY EDITOR: Paul Taylor CONTRIBUTORS:

James Ellis, James Cottee, Anthony O'Connor, Toby McCasker, Dylan Burns, Amy Flower, Adam Mathew ART DIRECTORS: Phillip Jorge, Camila M. Fernandes

Phillip Jorge, Camila M. Fernandes
CREATIVE DIRECTOR:
Paul Cook

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Ben Mansill

#### PUBLISHING & CIRCULATION

MANAGING DIRECTOR: Nick Cutler CIRCULATION ENQUIRIES: (02) 8305 6900 PRODUCTION MANAGER: Graham Hood

#### ADVERTISING & MARKETING

GROUP SALES MANAGER: Alex Brereton alex@derwenthoward.com.au (02) 8305 6909 ADVERTISING COORDINATOR: Elissa Lawrence

MARKETING MANAGER: Vanessa Morgan

#### **HOW TO CONTACT US:**

TEL: (02) 8305 6900 FAX: (02) 8305 6999 EMAIL: ops@derwenthoward.com.au Derwent Howard Pty Ltd P.O. Box 1037 Bondi Junction NSW 1355

WANT TO SUBSCRIBE?: 136 116 (NZ RESIDENTS +61 2 9282 8000) Fax (02) 9267 4363 www.ops2m.com.au/subs Or at www.derwenthoward.com.au/subs

#### **MANAGEMENT**

DIRECTORS: Jim Flynn, Nathan Berkley FINANCE DIRECTOR: Sandy Barnes MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT:

Distributed by Network Services Company in Australia and Netlink in NZ. Printed by Webstar.

Software piracy should not be condoned. To report suspicious activity please e-mail piracy@scee.net or elternatively, dial (02) 8266 5111.

For PlayStation 3 technical support and registration queries, please cell 1300 365 911. The 'PS' logo and 'PlayStation' are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. © Copyright 2001 All rights reserved. Official PlayStation Magazine accepts no responsibility for loss or damage of unsolicited contributions.

© Derwent Howard Pty Ltd 2009. All rights reserved. No articles or images may be reproduced wholly or in part without prior written permission from the publisher.

ABC AUDIT – JAN-JUNE 08 AVERAGE NET PAID SALES OF 17,941 IN AUSTRALIA AND 985 IN NEW ZEALAND.

SHOUT OUTS: Phill :: KJR :: Vinnie

## INSIDER 1



12 Top 10
OPS takes a took at me greatest rides to grace PlayStation games over the past decade.
Gentlemen, start your engines.

Gaming's latest and greatest



## GTA MEETS DEADWOOD

A revolver-lution in Westerns?

t the start of last month, and confirming many rumours floating around since 2005, Rockstar games announced Red Dead Redemption, a sequel to its cult 2004 Western Red Dead Revolver. At the same time, OPS collectively wept with joy. Set at the end of the 19th Century and described by Rockstar co-founder Sam Houser as being a game of "breathtaking beauty and intense action, all woven together with strong





## DEAD RISING 2 CONFIRMED FOR PS3

Capcom bows to pressure with a multi-format release

The biggest no-brainer of the decade, *Dead Rising 2*, has been officially announced. More surprising is Capcom's decision to out-source the development of this eagerly awaited zomble-killing sequel to a relatively unknown software house. To date, Blue Castle Games of Canada has only produced the sports-related *MLB Front Office Manager* and *The BIGS*, but fret not – key creative staff from the first *Dead Rising* are on board, including Capcom's global R&D kingpin Keiji Inafune.

Little else has been revealed, bar the setting: the gambling oasis of Fortune City. Screenshots clearly show you'll be able to slay zombie strippers with electric guitars and roulette wheels. We're excited!



13 Where to Now? It's Resident Evil review month, so it's fitting that we set about exploring where



14 Around the World in PS3
Head to page 14 to check out what's going on around the world in gaming. We've got hot models, Guitar Hero



plotlines in a massive vibrant, rural environment", Redemption is a sequel that's been begging to be made. Rockstar San Diego is the production team in charge and is using the RAGE engine the same foundation that gave life to Liberty City and Mldnight Club's Los Angeles - for their its open-world adventure.

It's worthy to note that Rockstar San Diego is the studio that actually built RAGE, so the

crew know it inside and out. It's also worth remembering how good GTAIV looks for such a densely-packed, vertical environment. Redemption will be far more spread out, and should look even better as a result.

This is one of the most exciting pieces of news we've heard this year and though details are light we're already wondering what could and should be

included after checking out the screenshots. The Wild West lends itself well to the open-world action genre, swapping urban spread for pockets of townships, cars for stagecoaches, automatic rifles for sixshooters and drugs for gold in them hills. Injected with Rockstar's particular flavour of comedy and drama, we'll have an exclusive look at this varmint in a few months.

### **RUMOUR: SYPHON FILTER COMING TO PS3**

Speculation is running wild that the developer of the original Syphon Filter is currently hard at work on a new sequel for PS3, code-named Syphon Filter 5. The first olue was when Sony Bend (previously known as Eidetic studios) put up a job ad for a PS3 programmer.

A more substantial clue came to

light when PCB Productions, a digital media outsourcing firm, posted on their credits page that they had done the facial motion-capture for a PS3 game from Sony Bend called Syphon Filter 5.

So: the cat's out of the bag. But can SF5 trump MGS4? We'll know soon enough - even money says this one's a Christmas release.



#### **WHAT'S HOT OR NOT**

Too hot to handle? Or too cold to hold?



**Red Dead** Redemption Hotter than the centre of the sun! Sweet.

Street Fighter IV Meet the new argument settler.



Resident Evil 5





50 Cent Swearing's not big or clever. Ah, who are we kidding?



Office NERF They might be made from foam but those things sting.

Sunburn You can now look forward to peeling like a leper.



**Paying for** crappy DLC Extra costumes? Cash for cheat codes? Robbery!

#### IN SHORT...



EA has announced Battlefield: Bad Company 2. In this installment, the Bad Company crew again find themselves in the thick of it, and BC2 will introduce a new level of fervor to vehicular warfare.



Red Ant, the local distributor for Capcom, Konami and Midway titles has gone into receivership. Red Ant was the largest independent videogames distributor in Australia.



The second edition of the Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition is available now. It's a good read and, unless you already picked up last year's version, will provide you with a horde of cool stats and records.

#### 

Screentest and more



#### DRIVER

One cop. Four cities. No time.

The Director Walter Hill



#### The Plot

NYPD detective and ex-stock car driver Tanne goes deep undercover to infiltrate the Castaldi crime ring. Working his way through Miami, San Francisco, LA and New York, Tanner eventually stumbles upon a scheme to assassinate the President. Does he have what it takes to put the brakes on the whole plan?

Bullitt: More car chases, funkier music

#### Green Light or Development Hell?

We chose Walter Hill because Driver ripped off his 1978 film The Driver in a lot of ways anyway. He also directed The Warriors and Last Man Standing, which were both rad. There's no reason whatsoever this wouldn't work. Sam Worthington is going off overseas, so throw in a bunch of '70s muscle (back in style if the new Challenger and Camaro

are anything to go by) and a cute co-star and it'd go off. Thing is, there is (or was) already a Driver adaptation in pre-production. Roger Avary, co-writer of Pulp Fiction, was supposed to helming it. It was slated to shoot years ago, but ended up on hold. Oddly enough, Avary has since been charged with gross vehicular manslaughter after an accident while allegedly drinkdriving. So, development hell it is then.



Castaldi:"You drove well tonight, Tanner. You got something you wanna say to me?"

Tanner: "I drive well every night."

#### The Cast:

Sam Worthington as ice-cold wheelman Tanner

Jean Reno as French assassin Jean-Paul

Maggie Gyllenhaal as Tanner's eventual crumpet Ali Andre Benjamin as black disco

stereotype Mojo Paul Sorvino as tubby mob boss Castaldi









#### LIFE IMITATES ART

**GRAN TURISMO** AND CITROEN **PUSH THE** ENVELOPE

ar company Citroën isn't the coolest kid on the block, despite the fact it's been kicking arse in the WRC for years. It's probably to do with being French, and the closest thing that the French have ever made to a supercar was the Renault A610 - a car motoring journo Jeremy Clarkson has described as a "cheese-eating surrender monkey" that does "nought to 60 in 5.7 seconds - about the same time as it takes to read a medium-sized book."

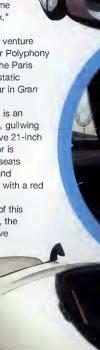
The GTbyCITROËN is the result of a joint venture between Citroën and Gran Turismo developer Polyphony Digital. The car made its global premiere at the Paris Motor Show where visitors could observe a static full-size version before actually driving the car in Gran Turismo 5: Prologue themselves.

The nearly five metre long GTbyCITROËN is an aggressively-styled supercar, with sharp lines, gullwing doors and gaping intakes, all riding on massive 21-inch diamond-effect aluminium wheels. The interior is equally impressive, with black leather racing seats (equipped with four-point racing harnesses) and brushed copper and steel surfaces - finished with a red LED heads-up display.

You can see both the inside and outside of this car in Gran Turismo 5: Prologue. In the game, the GTbyCITROËN is propelled by an electric drive train powered by a fuel cell, totally eliminating pollutant emissions

(theoretically, the car would only emit water). Production? Unlikely.







**NO. 2** Is this jackass Max Payne? - Johnny Knoxville

Same squinty face, same world-weathered appearance, same pain tolerance - the only difference is that Max Payne's usual fare is running gunfights, not sliding down a grassy hill naked on a chunk of ice. Funnily enough, we interviewed Knoxville in *OPS* #1 and



of gamers are over 60





**Top 10** 

## TOP 10 GREATEST PLAYSTATION CARS



#### **1 GARBAGE TRUCK**

A couple of GTAIV heavy-hitters could have seen inclusion here the bus, for instance, is rad too - but the garbos hanging off the back is a nice touch. Tonnes of fun. 20 of them, probably.



#### **6 SUBARU IMPREZA WRC**

The starring car of a pioneering game. The late great Scotman's Subie was the greatest fun you could have in mud without Norwegian students in bikinis

#### **2 CHEVY CHEVELLE**

Pure muscle, It's never actually named, so it could've been a Buick Skylark (a Buick GSX featured heavily in preview assets but not the game). Easy mistake; they shared components.



7 G-6155

**INTERCEPTOR** 

Cars with guns. Always a plus.

guns, missiles, smoke screens

into a boat. AND a motorbike.

and oil slicks. Oh, and it can turn

The G-6155 packs machine

#### 3 SUZUKI ESCUDO

Assuming there wasn't some kind of restriction on a race that stopped you using it, this hillclimbing banshee would win it. The only car you ever needed, no



#### 8 TROPHY TRUCK

Underrated game Baja, especially considering the Trophy Trucks are about the best sounding vehicles in any game, ever. Listen to these 800bhp monsters simply idling. It sounds like Satan gargling.



#### **4 BUGATTI VEYRON** The Concorde of cars, the Veyron

is one of the fastest accelerating and decelerating production autos in the world. The Veyron in Undercover doesn't quite reflect this but it's nice to drive one.



#### 9 V8 SUPERCARS

The thunder from down under We've grouped both the Holden Commodore and Ford Falcon together here to avoid any accusations of favouritism. Bring 'em back, Codies!





#### **5 JANSEN 88**

No, it's not the DeLorean from Back to the Future. Yes, it's supposed to look like it. Yes, it hovers. Yes, it leaves twin streaks of flames behind it. Why haven't you downloaded this yet?



#### **10 FORD TRANSIT**

We have fond memories of tearing through London with the Flying Squad on our tail. No heist is complete without a van to get to - and every man secretly wants to be part of a heist.

#### WHEN A DREAM OF UTOPIA BECOMES A NICHTMARE, IL TAKE A NINUA TO SET TUNIES BIGUTI









Available at:



...and all good anime DVD retailers

**BLACK LAGOON SEASON 1 COLLECTION** 



3 DISC

**AVAILABLE ON DVD MARCH 18** 





**BLACK BLOOD BROTHERS EPISODES 1-12** 







**AVAILABLE ON DVD MARCH 18** 





**SHAKUGAN NO SHANA SEASON 1 COLLECTION** 













## ARQUND THE WORLD IN PS3

OPS trawls high and low for what's going on around the globe in gaming



#### DURHAM, UK FIRE DRILL

Researchers at Durham University have adapted Valve's Source Engine, the 3D game engine used to drive Half-Life 2, into a fire drill simulator. The team created a virtual model of one of the university's departments and plan to use it to examine people's behaviour in a fire and to train people in good fire practice, However, while the simulation worked for most, those who played a lot of video games did rather unusual things, like running through doors on fire. Non-gamers treated it as a more serious exercise.



Heather Kuzmich, a top-five finalist from America's Next Top Model, will soon swap modelling clothes for modelling videogame characters. Kuzmich, who overcame the

Kuzmich, who overcame the social hurdles of Asperger's Syndrome to appear on the show, has enrolled in a video game art design program at the Illinois Institute of Art.

NEW YORK, USA

#### **GUITAR HERO HERO**

Danny Johnson, 14, set a world record in *Guitar Hero III* at a Best Buy store in Manhattan. Danny recorded a score of 973,954 with a roughly seven-minute rendition of DragonForce's 'Through the Fire and Flames'. He has destroyed about 80 *Guitar Hero* controllers in the last nine months with his intense play. Danny also plays piano, guitar, drums, saxophone and oboe in real life.

QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA SIGN OFF

Motorists on the

Gold Coast were recently treated to a lesson in game culture after vandals hacked a series of local road signs (two weeks after the same thing was done in Austin, Texas). Messages included a riff on 'All your base are belong to us' from Zero Wing. Transport officials are appalled.

ORUZGAN, AFGHANISTAN PLAYING SOLDIERS

SOLDIERS Australian

diggers serving in Afghanistan have praised Governor-General Quentin Bryce for spending a night at their frontline base in war-ravaged southeastern Oruzgan. During her stay she also handed out a number of gifts to the troops, including a games console. Nice

#### INTERNATIONAL CHARTS







#### **ELEASE SCHEDULE**

Coming soon to a store near you...

#### MARCH 2009



The Chronicles of Riddick: AODA



Eat Lead

HORROR DISTRIBUTOR: AFA



Resident Evil 5

RROR DISTRIBUTOR: THO



Stormrise
GENRE: RTS | DISTRIBUTOR: SEGA



Tom Clancy's HAWX
GENRE: FLIGHT | DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT



Wheelman GENRE: ACTION DISTRIBUTOR: TBC



WWE Legends of WrestleMania

#### MAY 2009



**Bionic Commando** 



Virtua Tennis 2009 GENRE: SPORTS | DISTRIBUTOR: SEGA



X-Men Origins: Wolverine
GENRE: ACTION | OISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION

#### MID 2009



Afro Samurai GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI



Batman: Arkham Asylum



GENRE: RACING | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI



The Godfather II
GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: EA



Guitar Hero: Metallica GENRE: PARTY DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION



Heroes over Europe GENRE: FLIGHT | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI



**I** Am Alive E: ACTION DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT



Infamous
GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: SONY



MAG (Massive Action Game)
GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: SON

SuperCar Challenge
GENRE: RACING | DISTRIBUTOR: TBC



UFC 2009: Undisputed
GENRE: SPORTS | DISTRIBUTOR: THO

#### **IUNE 2009**



Ghostbusters GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI

#### LATE/TBC 2009







Battlefield: Bad Company 2





Aliens: Colonial Marines
GENRE: SHOOTER | DISTRIBUTOR: SEGA



Bayonetta

ION DISTRIBUTOR: SEGA

BioShock 2

GENRE: SHOOTER | DISTRIBUTOR: 2K



Colin MgRae DiRT 2
GENRE: RACING | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI



Darksiders: Wrath of War



Fight Night Round 4
GENRE: SPORTS | DISTRIBUTOR: EA

Final Fantasy XIII



God of War III

RE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: SONY



Gran Turismo 5
GENRE: RACING | DISTRIBUTOR: SONY



Heavy Rain GENRE: ADVENTURE | DISTRIBUTOR: SONY





GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: 2K



Prototype
GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVSION



Red Dead Redemption
GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: ROCKSTAR



Red Faction: Guerrilla GENRE: ACTION DISTRIBUTOR: THO



Singularity
GENRE: SHOOTER | DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVSION



GENRE: FIGHTING | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI



Uncharted 2: Among Thieves
GENRE: ACTION | DISTRIBUTOR: SONY

#### **QUOTE UNQUOTE**

Industry chatter, inside tips and loose lips



"Tell them I hope they all either repent or die immediately." Disbarred US attorney Jack Thompson to Blend Games' Pete Haas upon hearing Haas was planning a meeting with Rockstar



"I'd rather that genre of videogames than somebody getting their f--king head chopped off with a samural sword while getting f--ked by a goblin up the arse with a laser." Noel Gallagher on **Guitar Hero** 



"We should celebrate the industry and how we've collectively grown it beyond all recognition." Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's president, David Reeves, on the big three: Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo



"There's no heart in them. We put so much into the writing of film scripts and plays, but not into games. And games are where the audience is going to be.' Andy "I was Gollum, you know" Serkis on soulless videogames



F.E.A.R. 2: Project Origin



Call of Duty: World at War



Skate 2



**Guitar Hero: World Tour** 



Resistance 2



**Grand Theft Auto IV** 



Lord of the Rings Conquest



Need for Speed Undercover



FIFA 09



**Little BigPlanet** 



#### **FAVOURITES**

## **TRIPOD**

Many consider Tripod the three pillars of Australian geek rock. We're assuming so anyway. We mainly just said that because it sounded clever. That's not to say it isn't true, but now we're rambling. We chatted to Scod, Yon and Gatesy about their favourite games. This is what they had to say.

#### GATESY (STEVEN GATES)



#### impossible Mission (C64)

The most impressive sprite I'd ever seen.

I was 13 and I remember, even then, being staggered by the amount of ideas they could squeeze into that beige keyboard.



#### Barbarian (C64)

It was all about the decapitation move. Even better cutting your mate's head off.



#### Xevious (Arcade)

The centrepiece of the local games room at Ocean Grove Caravan Park. Shoot spinning

glass discs, bomb bubbly gun turrets and dodge the floating walls. Yes, *Galaga* is the better game, but *Xevious* stands out.



#### Doom (PC)

Forked out \$3,500 for a brand new Pentium 100. Played *Doom* Friday to Monday non-stop.

Good times. Couldn't trust real corridors for weeks after that.



#### Bioforge (PC)

Memmanager was an arse, but once you got the game going I really wanted to help the poor

human/cyborg/abomination. Like a great movie, I really cared about the hero.



#### Interstate '76 (PC)

Guns on cars and no one has done it better. Maybe I should just say it – this is my favourite game of all

time. Great level design, customisable vehicles from the bits of cars you've pulverised, and your name is Groove Champion for god's sake!



#### Turok (N64)

Okay, it's a crap game but I'll never forget taking the Tripod N64 on the road for the first time, and Scod

and I murdering Yon in the multiplayer game 'Monkey Shoot'.



#### Mario Kart (N64)

All about the party. Everyone seemed to be familiar with this game at the time and have a

favourite character. Still the best racing game.



#### Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas (PS2)

Shoot me down in flames but this is the best of the series. *GTAIV* 

was such a disappointment. The scope of San Andreas is just huge. The environments forever changing. The vehicles inspired – from bikes and jet packs to helicopters and Harriers. You even got fat if you drove around too much!



#### Jak 3 (PS2)

Okay, Daxter's an annoying little cretin but this is one of my favourite sandbox games. It presents such

a great balance of so many different game types in the one completely original world. Kind of Disney meets GTA meets Final Fantasy meets Mad Max – and c'mon those driving levels were fantastic. I think I just realised I'm a motorhead. Sweet. Honourable mention goes to God of War on PS2 but I never finished it and I feel terrible about it.

#### SCOD (SCOTT EDGAR)



#### Pool of Radiance (C64)

I remember it used to crash when you tried to use your Fighter Sweep ability – back then the 'updates' were taking it back to Dick Smith

and getting a new 'disk five'. I'm getting teary. Maybe I'll try and find that game again. You think Vista would run it?



#### Frontier: Elite 2 (PC)

An intergalactic trading game that made up the planets as you went along. You got a game that felt mind-crackingly huge – I was kinda hoping after all their "look how big space is" promotion that

Mass Effect would go here too. Oh well. Next Gen: 0, Intel 286: 1.



#### Planescape Torment (PC)

I'm not a huge fan of super-wordy RPGs where there's more reading than playing – but here it works beautifully. Plus your love interest is played by Sheena Easton. Life is good.



#### Zeida - Ocarina of Time (N64)

1999: My girlfriend and I had been planning our driving trip to the Scottish Highlands for months, so she wasn't thrilled when I fired up my Ninners in the bed & breakfast on night one – but she only

had to see a few minutes of Zelda to get it. Here's why chicks aren't into video games: 'cause they're usually crap. Not so Ocarina, though.



#### Mercenaries (PS2)

I never got why this game wasn't a massive classic. It's such a coherent, atmospheric game. One time in a hotel room in Brizzy we strapped a whole bunch of C4 to a red Ferrari and blew a

Buddhist Temple, just to see if we could. We could. BOOM, Talk about a religious experience.



#### Prince of Persia - The Sands of Time (PS2)

Gameplay, design, pace – it all works like a good game should. The best thing about it is how tight it is as a piece of storytelling. It's a tragic love story which begins at the ending, classic stuff.



#### Psychonauts (PS2)

This game is fricking outrageous. It's got the gameplay of Zelda and the mentalness of *The Mighty Boosh*. Name one other game you can run the bulls in a Spanish velvet-painting-world or be

tracking a homicidal postman in a Stepford McCarthylst suburban nightmare, or run a dangerous dad-issue gauntlet in a circus made of meat.



#### The Eider Scrolls IV: Oblivion (PS3)

For sheer man-hours this has to be my favourite game. I've played it through three times and not hurried either. One time, after (SPOILER ALERT) being tricked into getting doped up and

massacring an innocent family, I threw all my armour and gear on the ground, everything I owned, and ran off into the forest in my undies, mad and naked like Lancelot. I got a job killing slaughterfish, worked my way back up and was reborn as the greatest mage the world had ever seen. As a player you can get crazy with this game and the engine keeps up with you. It's rock solid.



#### | Braid (X360)

A simple, devilishly clever puzzle game heavily laced with gaming in-jokes tangles up with a painfully surreal outpouring of Nerd Love; equal parts romantic sensitivity and dangerous self-delusion.



#### Civilization Revolution (DC)

The main reason my DS is all floppy and broken these days. Freudian much? Again with the procedurally generated levels the game feels infinite. Anyhow, can't talk. I'm building a University but

the Russians are all up in my grill. I suspect the answer may be tanks.





#### Grand Theft Auto III (PS2)

I bought a PS2 so I could play this game. I really wanted to have sex with a hooker. The inventive missions. The gameplay. The chaos. Sitting

around in a hotel room with ten other people trying to make more explosions happen than the last guy.



#### Grand Theft Auto: Vice City (PS2)

Can't remember much about this but the music and all the pink. And some cool bits with motorbikes. In a way, the most complete GTA game. A world that fits together so well, I s'pose largely

helped by the fact that it's a period piece.



#### Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas (PS2)

I loved the whole kooky rural-American-hippy-conspiracy thing going on. Perhaps they over-reached with the Harrier Jump Jet. I tried to do a lot of missions with that damn jet. Even if a mission

started in Los Santos, I'd drive all the way into the desert and get the bloody thing. But it was too hard to control and I always died. I loved the idea of taking out an entire gang with a Jet, but it never really worked. I say this: IT WOLLID IN REAL LIFE.



#### Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories (PSP)

My favourite GTA moment ever occurs in Vice City Stories on the PSP. Spoiler follows! There's a whole plotline where you act as Phil Collins' bodyguard. It's his actual voice and everything, of course.

The final mission of the set takes place at Phil's concert. As Phil sings 'In the Air Tonight', you're up above in the lighting grid beating up baddies who are trying to loosen the bolts and kill Phil. For someone who has spent the last fifteen years obsessed with the urban myth (or is it?) relating to that song, this moment was pure heaven.



#### Half-Life 2 (PS3)

The gravity gun and all its possibilities rocks. Yes, it is unusual for so many circular saw blades to be just lying around. My dad would be disgusted at how little care these people take care of their tools.



#### Portal (PS3)

I couldn't believe I was enjoying a game that didn't involve guns and I don't expect it to happen again. The song at the end – sorry to spoil it but there's a song at the end – is beautiful.



#### Operation Flashpoint (PC)

Just like in GTA, missions unfold so differently each time. Yes it was buggy and PC-y, but it was so re-playable. I hear Flashpoint 2's coming out on PS3. Fingers crossed.



#### X-Wing (PC)

So damn good. The key to its brilliance is the whole power management thing. You had to constantly decide how much power went to lasers, engines and shields. This gave the game a

tactical element beyond the basic tactical dogfighting.



#### Dark Forces (PC)

This was the first Star Wars-based FPS. Your guy doesn't have a lightsaber yet – which is totally cool. They left themselves somewhere to go with Jedi Knight – also a ripper. Dark Forces was portunity to send lots of Stormtroopers into chasms and also to do

a great opportunity to send lots of Stormtroopers into chasms and also to do some really hard puzzles.



#### Resident Evil 4 (Wil)

I'm sorry, PlayStation 2 owners, but this rocks on the Will They integrated the wand really well. But the best thing about this game is just how silly the monsters are.



#### IDIO CLIPS

Now in its third year, it's officially annual! Tripod are now looking for submissions

for their 2009 Idio Clips competition. Following on from the success of past Idio Clips, Scod, Yon and Gatesy are casting a nerdnet in the hopes of finding budding filmmakers – and seasoned ones – to make music videos to their songs. They'll then select their favourites and perform them live whilst the clip plays on a

big screen in the Melbourne International Comedy Festival 2009. There are two ways you can get involved:

1. Check out www.idioclips.com for a list of songs and detail on how you can become a Tripod video clip maker. If you make the cut not only will Tripod play live to your clip at the Comedy Festival but also you'll be in the running for a cash prize. Submissions close Friday 27 March, 2009.

2. Get yourself a ticket to Idio Clips and marvel at how dangerous a thing a Tripod fan with time on their hands can truly be as well as seeing Scod, Yon and Gatesy in their only comedy festival appearance.



# BLU-RAY. LIVE THE MOVIES IN HIGH DEFINITION



### AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME ON BLU-RAY

THESE GREAT MOVIES AND MANY MORE. OUT NOW FOR UNDER \$30\*.











PLAY ON STAND ALONE BLU-RAY PLAYERS AND PLAYS TATION 3







## KEEPING IT UNREAL!

ve been driving myself bonkers lately pondering my addiction to music games. I've sort of been a 'real' muso for years. Well, I was in a band that played about 20 gigs once upon a time and released an EP, and can bludge my way through a few three chord wonders. So, with what I've experienced - pretty much everywhere online when words to the effect of "Rock Band is awesome" or "Guitar Hero is ace" are muttered, whereby some mentally shortsheeted 'serious' musician pipes up with, "You're wasting your time with a stupid game, you should learn to play a real instrument" - should I not also be dishing the snobbery?

Of course not, for these people are utter tossers. Obviously from the "I've suffered for my music, now it's your turn" school, or overeager cadets in the Fun Police, these people seemingly can't bear for others to just have fun with music. So what if you're not inspired to become the next Jimmy Page? Some would actually be thankful for that.

In fact, if their theory is adhered to when it comes to other games, those of us who are vaguely enlightened know the arguments. We should stop playing driving games and become V8 Supercar drivers. Flight sims? For soft cocks! The only way to keep it real is to get your pilot's licence and take to the real air! As for the likes of

GTA... erm, well, a quick scan of the daily news rags would suggest some may have already put this theory to practise. Hmm.

For all this snobby carry-on, the irony is that enjoyment of the likes of Rock Band and Guitar Hero has actually led to many being inspired to take up 'real' instruments. If I had a dollar for everybody I've heard of purchasing a set of 'real' drums since getting a taste playing games I'd be... well, my piggy bank would weigh more than it does now. Hell, I even finally invested in a bass after all these years of suppressing wannabe Kim Deal urges (interestingly, most Pixies songs are easier to play on 'real' bass than on the expert setting in Rock Band - although ace the former and you should be getting gold stars pretty quickly in the latter).

So, the haters can get stuffed – we like our rock games, as they give us the chance to play unfettered pretendsies, unleashing the rock god or goddess within as we pinball about our lounges letting fly more rock poses than a Festering Hole full of Gene Simmonses.

It works for me, and I fully intend to rock on, be it pretend or 'real'.

Amy Flower is currently undergoing intense treatment in an attempt to cure her of the habitual writing of sentences that could easily pass for theses.

ff Flight sims? For soft cocks!

## MASSIVE BLU-RAY GIVEAWAY!

## 10 OF THE LATEST AND GREATEST BLU-RAY MOVIES

#### Watch these hot titles in spectacular high-definition on your PS3

Thanks to our good friends at Warner Home Video, OPS is delighted to offer you the chance to win an awesome line-up of movies, available for the first time on Blu-ray! There are 10 must-see classics up on offer, and one lucky winner is going to take the lot!



#### THIS PRIZE PACK FEATURES THE **FOLLOWING MUST-OWN TITLES:**

Justice League: A New Frontier • Casablanca • Eraser • Every Which Way But Loose • Gods and Generals • Interview With The Vampire • Outbreak • Pale Rider • Poltergeist • The Shawshank Redemption

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN these 10 amazing Blu-ray movies, tell us in 25 words or less:

Why is this the ultimate Blu-ray collection?

#### **HOW TO ENTER**

Log in to the website www.gameplayer.com. au, go to our competitions section and enter the code word Warner; or send the answer on an envelope with your name and address to: OPS - Warner Home Video Blu-ray Comp PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction NSW 1355



Imagine, if you dare, e diabolical figure - a man consumed by evil. He has money, and power, and the roundest head in the land. Yet this is not enough for him, for he is truly wicked. He can only enjoy true delight when he steals into a nursery, and smothers the life out of a helpless child...

For the purposes of this metaphor, the man is our Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd -or at least, his tax policy. And the child? The future of video game development in Australia.

His inaction is choking the life out of It

We Australians have been rightfully proud of our game developers since the dawn of the modern industry in the 80s. From blockbuster epics like BioShock, to the humble, quiet achievers like Trainz; we've proven that we have what it takes to make world class games.

But it takes more than will and talent to build an industry. It takes money, too, And with his high tax rates, Mr. Rudd is telling the EAs and the Activisions of this world: 'take your games industry jobs elsewhere!

Witness the train wreck of games development in Western Europe. The UK used to have the third biggest games industry in the world. But thanks to tax breaks from the state governments of Canada, they've lost their spot to a nation with less than half their population.

Games development in France has been cut in half.

This threat is real, for business lives in a world without borders. Businesses - and gaming IS a business -- always move to where they cen make the most. money, as surely as water flows downhill.

Fonce spoke of this with a bigwig at the Shanghai studios of Ubisoft, a company that has been quietly buying and founding studios around the world, in Eastern Europe, Singapore, and even Brazil. He told me that Ubisoft would love to set up studios in Austrelia, but that our high taxes stopped them dead in their trácks. 🦫

cks. High taxes are a recent phenomenon for instance, a hundred years ago, there was no such thing as income tax. This drain on our freedom has inched up over the yeers, as governments test the water with how much larceny they can get away with. Do not believe for a moment that our taxes are so high because they need to be. All that excess disappears into waste -- and graft.

A case in point; our leaders have proven willing to harid out billions in grants to car manufacturers, all to prop up an industry that may not even have a future in Australia.

But gaming does have a future. Gaming IS the future. We have the best and brightest minds right here, and the vision to forge the greatest entertainment the world has ever seen. But our dreams may yet be smothered by a government mired in the past

Don't do it, Mr. Rudd, Don't kill our

Angry Sackboy is an ex-videogame journalist with a bone to pick. His views do not necessary match those of OPS. Not always, anyway.

"High taxes are a recent phenomenon — for instance, a hundred years ago, there was no such thing as income tax" ""



#### Where opportunities are endless. Get into PSN. For Free\*

For a bigger, better experience sign up for free\* to PLAYSTATION®Network and get access to a world of exclusive content including original games for PLAYSTATION®3, PlayStation®Portable games, applications and demos.

Fight for your life in 'Siren Blood Curse™', find a worthy opponent in 'Tekken™5: Dark Resurrection Online', battle through enemies and ever-evolving plant-life in 'PixelJunk™ Eden', or human-catapult characters and watch the chaos unfold in 'PAIN'.

\*Subscription to PLAYSTATION®Network is free of charge. Broadband internet service required.

#### Now Available:











"A", "PLAYSTATION", and "\$" are registered tredemerks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "" is a registered trademark of Sony Corporation. Siren Blood Curse" © 2008 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Siren Blood Curse is a trademerk of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. TEKKEN™ 5 DARK RESURRECTION ONLINE & © 1994-2007 NAMCO BANDAI GAMES Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by NAMCO BANDAI GAMES Inc. All rights reserved. Siren Blood Curse is a trademerk of Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Pain © 2007 Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by SCEA San Diego Studios/ Idol Minds, LLC. All righte reserved. Pixel Junk™ Eden © 2008 Q-Games Ltd. Published by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. Developed by Q-Gemes Ltd. Pixel Junk is a trademark of Q-Games. All righte reserved. SPS1990/0PSM

## BOX

Speak to us!

#### LETTER OF THE MONTH!

## WINNERS ARE GRINNERS

reader for a long time now and I thought it was time I dropped you a line. In recent months we've been blessed with the brilliant Trophy system. While this is not news to many of us, it is only just beginning to become a mainstream PS3 function - given the steady release of games with Trophy support, and a slowly increasing library of patched games. For mine, Trophies are an improvement on the 360's

Achievement Point system, which offers only an arbitrary number with no real indication of how you amassed your score. We, on the other hand, have the option of playing lots of games for bronzes and silvers, or sticking it out and earning golds and platinums. This brings me to my point. Up until now, it feels as if developers have not really taken to the Trophy system. We've been largely snubbed in receiving Trophy patches for some fairly mainstream games, with the online community begging for patches for games like Assassin's Creed. Our Trophies have felt like they've been, at best, cut and pasted Achievements. And the only unique goal for us to strive after, the elusive platinum trophies have been poorly named simply 'Platinum' across many games. BioShock's was the worst offender, with PLATINUM in capital letters. Nothing cheapens the feeling of striving to attain the highest honours in the game than receiving the literary equivalent of Homebrand. Come on devs! Where is the love?! Surely patching in Trophies wouldn't be too difficult, and with the amount of Trophy whores currently on the prowl in an



effort to increase their level, it could only serve to increase sales slightly. I've been glad to see a few PS3 specific Trophies, and nothing quite completes a game like an aptly named platinum trophy. Now let's just see a few more patched

#### Andrew McDonaugh, via email

We tend to agree. We don't think anyone would've predicted just how popular Achievement Points would become when the concept first appeared, and Trophies were a fantastic response that gave PS3 gamers an even better system of cataloguing their in-game achievements. Trophies, at their lowest level, are really just a whole bunch of digital willies of varying lengths, but there's no denying they keep gamers playing games longer then they used to. And that's a good thing. That's value for money spent by gamers, and value for time spent by developers.



LETTER OF THE MONTH WINS... RES!

The letter of the month this issue will receive a copy of Resident Evil 5 for their troubles – enjoy!



#### GREAT LENGTHS

Hey guys, I'm a long time reader, firsttime writer, and I'll start off by saying how great the mag is going and it looks great. Now, onto the point of why I am typing this here email. For Christmas, my lucky soul was presented with a brand-spanking new 80GB PS3, with LittleBigPlanet along with it. I was so happy; I raced towards the plasma and hooked it up. A week or so after my awesome gift, I wanted more games, I headed down to JB Hi-Fi to get myself a copy of Mirror's Edge, and I finished it in two days. I've been renting some games out, such as Prince of Persia, Call of Duty: World at War and have to say I'm disappointed with the game length. In PoP, I got a Trophy for finishing the game in less than 12 hours. CoD: WaW I finished in less than eight hours. Are games getting shorter lately? Or is it just me? PS: I just turned 14, that's why I couldn't get a PS3 for myself.

#### Scott, via email

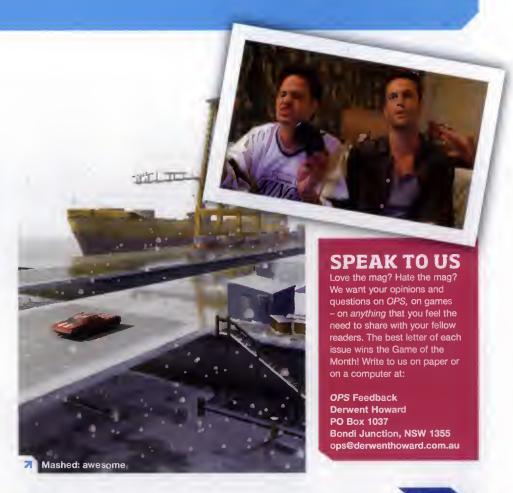
Cheers for your email Scott, glad you enjoy the magazine. You're certainly not the only gamer who has taken issue with game length these days, so we're not singling you out, but we do disagree somewhat. At 14, you're quite a young bloke, so you definitely missed the era where games, at best, only used to last one or two hours. They weren't really that much cheaper back then either, factoring in inflation. By comparison, eight to 12 hours is great. Some games last a great deal longer, like GTAIV or Fallout 3, but these are exceptions rather than the rule these days. For us, it's about value for money. We'd much rather play a great game that lasts around 10 or so hours than a buggy piece of shit that lasts for 1000 hours. You mentioned Word at War, and that it was too short. It is, however, very very good while it lasts. It's extremely likely, then, that if the game was twice as long it would half as good. Bug-ridden, rushed, un-tested that kind of thing. This is a quality versus quantity argument, and a bit of an oversimplification. The film industry isn't held accountable for the difference between a three hour romantic-epic and a 90-minute action-comedy. At the end of the day, you can pay \$30 for a DVD that lasts no more than three hours, or three times that amount for a game that last three times as long. Seems reasonable to us. This is a great debate topic, however, and it's something we'll explore further soon.

## MULTIPLAYER MADNESS

Hey guys, still loving the mag, doing a great job - but I'm writing to ask if you know what's happened with splitscreen? I believe it must finally be extinct, which is such a disappointment as I used to love playing games with my friends or brother. The only way I could possibly do that now is to have them buy a PS3, then ring them up, tell them to go online, wait for it to load and hopefully the game allows for playing with friends and not just randoms! I'm only new to online gaming and sure it's fun, but it still ain't the same, especially when unlike them you don't get to spend 24/7 playing games when you have to work 60 hours a week. Losing gets boring after a while. The PS3 is also compatible with up to SEVEN players so why are games only ever one player?! Does anyone remember Mashed? Would that not just be the best game for seven players or what? But even just two players in games from now on would be swell. I thought we were going forward in gaming, not backwards. Even NES had two players. So come on developers, just do it please!

#### Brock Gallacher, via email

We couldn't agree more Brock. It's absolute madness that so many games that, even a few years ago, would've supported splitscreen no longer do. What the hell happened? Did developers think we just wouldn't notice? We're tired of developers using online modes to explain away the lack of any splitscreen to speak of. Where did it all go pear-shaped? All the best racing games of last generation had splitscreen – FACT. Cut to today, and look at Burnout Paradise, Race Driver GRID, Colin McRae DiRT, Pure... the list goes on. No splitscreen. Did we lose a war?



## umdcases

REPLACEMENT UMD CASES FOR BROKEN PSP GAMES AND MOVIES

To order please contact: info@umdcases.com.au or shop online: www.umdcases.com.au













### BOX

Speak to us!

#### DEMO DROUGHT

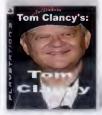
I love the design of the new mag and have been reading since the old PSone days, but I have noticed you have no demo disc. This seems odd because your sister mag owned by the same company in England has Blu-ray game demos. What's going on?

#### Ben F. Bridges, VIC

We probably should've answered this last month, when we ran a demo disc, but we'll answer it here to clear a few things up. Demos are returning, but to make it worthwhile for readers discs will be quarterly - which will greatly reduce repeats. Between discs we'll continue the cool bonus extras, like this month's free downloadable PSN game PAIN and our massive mega-poster. Also worth noting, in case anyone else is under the same impression, Official PlayStation Magazine UK is not our sister magazine, and we're not part of the same company. Everything you read in OPS Australia is written by Australians in Australia. Or on a laptop in a plane. OPS Australia is 100% local.



#### IT SHOULD BE A GAME!



#### TOM CLANCY'S TOM CLANCY

#### By Jack Hayes

Set in a possible future, Tom Clancy has taken over the gaming industry and book industry with over 100 games and books being churned out each month with his name plastered all over it. Business is booming, but when terrorists attack Tom Clancy HQ you'll need to prove you're not all mouth and no combat trousers. It's time for TC to take charge. This is when you take over. In a sandbox-style game you control Tom Clancy, serving revenge to the scumbag terrorists that destroyed your business. Shocking twists, death defying stunts and romantic interests – this game has it all.

The legendary feature, 'It Should Be a Game', is back by popular demand! Naturally, since we just brought it back an' all, we haven't received that many entries as of yet. That's where you come in. Send us all your game ideas, funny, serious, insane or otherwise to ops@derwenthoward.com.au. If you happen to have any 'mad Photoshop skillz' then flex those muscles and send us some pics to go with it. It'll make your entry all the more sweet. Get cracking people!

#### THE PlayStation CROSSWORD!

#### TEST YOUR BRAIN TO WIN A GAME!

How to enter: Use the letters from the coloured squares and re-arrange them to form the name of a videogame character. Send your answers to OPS@derwenthoward. com.au with OPS Crossword as the subject. Entries close March 24.

#### **ACROSS**

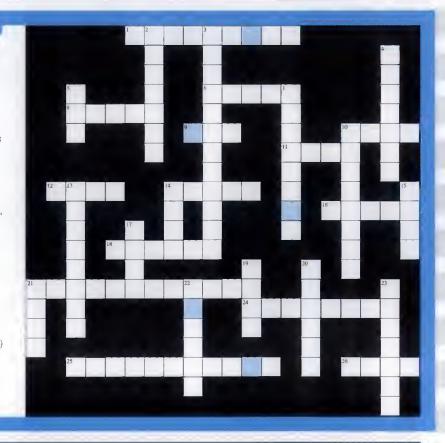
- Fictious band behind 'Gangster Friday', main theme of the original GTA (9)
- 6. Judge Dredd: Dredd vs \_\_\_\_
- 8. Chaos or Reign (5)
- 9. PS2 slasher, The Mark of \_\_\_ (3)
- 10. Crash Bandicoot's sister (4)
- 11. Someone you should F.E.A.R. (4)
- 12. Banned Midway cop game (4)
- 14. Takes a bullet in the head in The Darkness (5)
- 16. Creator of Metal Gear Solid,
  Kojima (5)
  18. The tugs that killed Max Payne's
- family were high on this (6)

  21. Mace Griffin or Star Wars.
- \_\_\_\_\_\_(6,6) 24. *Uncharted's* treasure (2,6)

- 25. Jackie Chan (1
- 26. Developer of next gen *Bionic* Commando (4)

#### DOWN

- 2. Rocky, SingStar or X-Men (7)
- 3. Aussie act that had two tracks on SingStar Rocks! (12)
- 4. Tanner's nemesis (7)
- 5. Neversoft western (3)
- Tekken's South Korean taekwondo terror (8)
- 10. Jupiter's second largest moon, setting for *G-Police* (8)
- 13. The 'A' in HAWX (8)
- 14. Raiden's real name (4)
- The player's SAS operator in COD4: Modern Warfare, \_\_\_\_ McTavish (4)
- Guitar Hero World Tour track, 'The Wind Cries \_\_\_\_\_' (4)
- 19. Victim of Kratos' deicide (4)
- 20. Polyphony Digital's non-Gran Turismo racer, Tourist \_\_\_\_\_ (6
- 21. Desert race featured in 2XL Games' latest, \_\_\_\_ 1000 (4)
- 22. Drake or Hale (6)
- 23. James Bond: Everything or \_\_\_\_\_(7)



24. EHONDA 25. SQUARE

Last monity's answers: (Across) 1, GERDY 4, SAN 6, DAXTER 8, SUBZERO 9, TENPENNY 11, RECON 15, APOCALYPSE 17, CAPOEIRA 19, BLACK 22, SAM 26, GABE 27, INLINE 28, LAND 29, CORTEX (Down) 1, GEAR 2, COLTON 3, DUKENUKEM 4, SIDHE 5, SCOTLAND 7, DESTROY 10, NERO 12, OKAMI 13, STOCK 14, NEWZEALAND 16, LUXOFLUX 21, PEACE 23, MANHUNT

#### 1. IDENTIFY THE CITY FROM









## THE OPS QUIZ THING

Our imaginatively titled quiz will sort out the wheat from the chaff. Prove your worth with these brainbusters!

#### THESE SCREENSHOTS:



2. THIS GAME **WAS BASED** ON A FILM DIRECTED BY **WALTER HILL** BASED ON A NOVEL BY SOL YURICK WHICH **BORROWED ELEMENTS OF** THE ANABASIS.

- 4. THERE WERE **TWO SURFING GAMES RELEASED LAST GENERATION ENDORSED BY** PROFESSIONAL SURFERS. **NAMETHOSE** SURFERS.
- 5. WHAT GAME FEATURES THE **CHARACTERS** MARLOWE, SWEETWATER, HAGGARD AND REDFORD?
- 6. FILL IN THE GAP:

Hitman 2: Silent Assassin, Hitman Blood Money



#### **CUTTINGS**

#### **GOOD DAY**

I'm looking for the email address to send letters through to your magazine. Tyron Els

You found it dude.

#### MEDAL DISHONOUR

Why do the medals in OPS2 look cooler than the ones in OPS?

Sergy Alexander Annin

We did it on purpose, and we had a bet on whether anybody would mention it. Thanks a lot, you just cost us \$100.

#### **EXCLUSIVE EXCLUSIVES**

When are we going to see games released exclusively for PS3 purely because the 360 doesn't have the hardware to play them?

Eden Hill, QLD

It's already happening. Heavy Rain, Metal Gear Solid 4, Gran Turismo 5: Prologue and so on. Hell. System 3 boss Mark Cale even told us last year that the reason Ferrari Challenge was on PS3 and not 360 was because the 360 wouldn't do what he required it

#### 7. IDENTIFY THE GAMES FROM THE SCREENSHOTS:













F) Tourist Trophy

Warriors 3. The Cod of War 4. Kelly Slater, Sunny Garcia 5. Battlefield: Bad Company 6. Hitman Contracts 7. A) Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped B) GUN C) God of War 5. Bea Effect 2 E) The Darkness Answers: 1, A) New York City [True Crime: New York City] B) London [The Getaway] C) Parts [Midnight Club II] D) Nice [Driv3r] E) Las Vegas [Rainbow Six Vegas] F) Tokyo [Tokyo Xterme Racer] 2, The

#### COMPETITIONS

WIN! WIN! WIN!



#### COMPETITIONS

WIN! WIN! WIN!



#### GO NINJA, GO NINIA, GO

Thanks to Madman we've got 10 cool prize packs including Naruto (Uncut) V10 – Surviving The Cut on DVD and Naruto (Manga) V41 to give away.

To enter, head to www.gameplayer. com.au/competitions and tell us, in 25 words or less, what you'd do if you were Naruto.

> GAMEPLAYER CODE WORD: NINJA

#### HAX-PLOITATION

To celebrate the release of *Afro Samurai* on PS3 we've got 10 copies of the Samuel L. Jackson slasher to give away thanks to Atari.

To enter, head to www.gameplayer.com. au/competitions and tell us, in 25 words or less, what kind of Samurai hairstyle you'd sport and why

GAMEPLAYER CODE WORD:

AFRO



#### **HOW TO ENTER**

To enter Official PlayStation Magazine competitions log on to www.gameplayer.com.au/competitions or send your entries with the name of the competition CLEARLY marked to OPS competitions PO BOX 1037, Bondi Junction 1355. Please include your name, age and address with your answer on the back of an envelope. Chance plays no part in determining winners. Competitions open 18/03/2009 and close 15/04/2009. Winners will be notified by mail and names displayed at www.gameplayer.com.au.

## SUBSCRIPTION



Death Race, the most evil spectator sport on Earth, comes to DVD and Blu-ray in an extended version too hot for cinemas. This action packed explosive movie, starring Jason Statham, Tyrese Gibson, lan McShane and Joan Allen will have you gripping your seat at every twist and turn. Out on Blu-ray now!

- Special Features:
   Start You Engines: Making a Death Race
- Behind The Wheel: Dissecting the stunts
- Feature commentary with director Paul W.S. Anderson and producer and Jeremy Bolt
- Create your own race: Choose multiple camera angles and share your race with friends

Subscribe to Official PlayStation Magazine this month and receive Death Race on Blu-ray!\* Strictly limited offer!

UNIVERSAL

A SAVING OF **6 FREE ISSU** WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE OPS FOR 12 ISSUES

THE PERFECT HIGH-DEFINI



Film © 2008 Universal Studios and H2S2 FilmproduktionsgesellshaftmbH & Co. KG. All Rights Reserved.

RESTRICTED

## **EASY CO SUBSCRIBE**



#### Call our Hotline (and quote code M9040PS)

136 116



Fax (02) 9267 4363



#### FREEPOST the form to:

Official PlayStation Magazine Subscriptions Reply Paid 4967, Sydney, NSW 2001

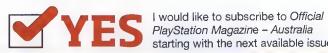


#### Visit our website at:

www.derwenthoward.com.au/subs



#### SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM



starting with the next available issue.

1. YOUR DETAILS	
TITLE   MR   MRS   MS   MISS  Name	
	T dd.code
	ode)
	ve Death Race?
Tick if you do not	wish to receive information about special promotions ward and carefully selected partners.
2. PLEASE 1	TICK ONE BOX
AUSTRALIA	
\$79.95 for 12 is	ssues SAVE \$99.45 OFF COVER PRICE
NEW ZEALAND AUD \$99.95 for	r 12 issues SAVE \$103.45 OFF COVER PRICE
	or 12 issues SAVE \$19.45 OFF COVER PRICE
3. METHOD	OF PAYMENT
Cheque/Money	Order (Aust. Only) made payable to ACP Publishing Pty Ltd.
Mastercard	] Visa
Card No	
	_ 1
Expiry date	
	PLEASE PRINT)
Card Holder Name	e (PLEASE PRINT) Date

DERWENT A HOWARD

ORDER CODE: M904OPS

\*OFFER ENDS: 14/04/09



# BOXING ELEVIER

Fight Night is the boxing series that eats lightning and craps thunder OPS gets in the ring with Fight Night Round 4 gameplay producer Brian Hayes for 10 rounds of pugilistic interrogation.

OPS: Fight Night Round 3 is one of an extremely limited number of early in the generation releases that hasn't appeared to age at all. Nearly three years on and it still doesn't seem dated. What sort of expectations does that place on the development team, and on Round 4 itself?

BH: All of us here on the development team are huge Fight Night Round 3 fans, so when we were tasked with making Round 4 we were both very excited and very aware of the challenge that existed. We all agree that Round 3 was a really fun game, but it didn't really provide a realistic or authentic experience they way other sports titles do. Our focus from the very beginning is to deliver the same level of fun as Round 3, but through a realistic simulation of the boxing. You will notice a bigger focus on head movement and footwork instead of slapping the other boxer's punches out of the air. You will see a bigger focus on speed and timing with counter-punching and fast combinations as opposed to big slow haymakers and stun punches. You will see that punches that miss, glancing punches, partially blocked punches and clean power shots. Also, we know we need to deliver a much more robust career mode. These types of goals help us focus our efforts to ensure we deliver a great game that is going to be fun for a lot of people - fans of Fight Night or not.

OPS: Just how difficult is it to take such a kinetic, and full contact, sport and turn it into a believable videogame? Is it difficult to translate the speed and fluidity of real boxing? JD: Well, there are reasons that the majority of people, ourselves included, are not championship-caliber professional boxers. So you always have to take steps to make things accessible to the end user. That being said, with the new game engine we've taken big steps forward in capturing the essence of the sport and we are really happy with the way the game plays. The changes we made to the mechanics allow us to deliver a faster, more dynamic experience that is still strategic and challenging, but much more fluid like the back-and-forth action you see in a real boxing match.

OPS: Does Round 4 capitalise on any newfound potential in the PS3 since Round 3?

BH: The biggest improvements will be the use of the new physics engine and the inclusion of inside fighting (and thus outside fighting). With the power of the PS3, we have been able to build a great game engine which is based on realworld physics. Punches will be deflected, partially blocked. Boxers will be able to get right into the chest of their opponent to deliver crushing uppercuts and hooks without clipping through the flesh of their opponents. The potential of the PS3 has allowed us to make a boxing game that brings in all the action that you would find in the ring to your system at home.

OPS: What progress has been made with balancing the fighting? Have the haymakers and flash KOs been looked at? What does the inside fighting add to the experience?

BH: Yes. In Round 3 the limitations of

the engine prevented the team to allow boxers to get right up to opponent and thus keeping to the outside was also kind of an after thought. In Round 4 the ability to use the spa in the ring will play a much larger role in your strategy. For instance a guy like Ali will be able to use his quick movement and long jab to keep opponents out of range for the majority of the fight. Tiring him out and leaving him open to a devastating combo. There are still flash KOs, but they will be physics based - whether it is the third round or the 12th, like real boxing sometimes that one punch at the right moment can send your opponent to the mat.

OPS: The venue atmosphere is probably something that could've been done better in Round 3 - what steps have been taken to improve this? More dynamic commentary? Roudier



can expect a focus on the big fight (and even small fight) atmospheres. You will see what you would expect to see at a big fight - photographers, corner men, differentiations in the crowd, a larger variety of commentary and authentic ring entrances. The most important part is that they will all react to what is going on in the ring. For instance photographers will start to take more pictures as the action in the ring intensifies. We really want people to feel that fight atmosphere when they pop in a copy of Round 4, and I think they will.

OPS: Can we expect any tweaks to the career mode? Don King's Prizefighter, for instance, fell down in terms of controls but had a very novel and compelling career mode compared to Round 3, which was a little bland and menubased.

BH: Yes, Round 4 features an all-new career mode. called Legacy Mode. The user can create or choose a boxer from eight weight divisions be getting into later, but rest assured, it is one of our biggest focuses for Round 4.

#### OPS: Speaking of modes, anything new of note on that front? Any more training modes?

BH: There are six types of training games the user can choose from. Each training game specialises in training different boxer skills. In addition to using the training modes to improve boxer stats, the training modes will also improve your ability on the controls. Training will be something that will directly impact your ability in the ring.

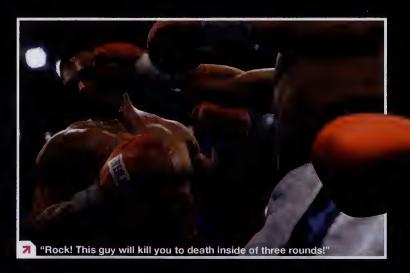
**OPS:** How about an online championship, where you'd need to become a contender before challenging for the belt? Would that work, logistically speaking? BH: The biggest new online mode is the Online World Championships. Users are able to create a boxer in one of three weight divisions and compete against other users around the world for regional, national and world titles. You can create different styles of boxers, but every boxer has relatively equal boxer attributes, so skill determines success. Separate Online World Championship rankings let users see where they stack up against the rest of the world. In addition to the OWC, Round 4 includes ranked and unranked head-to-head match-ups.





#### DEPTH

**Fight Night Round 4** 





OPS: Boxing is a truly international sport, how will you go about illustrating that in Round 4?

BH: In Round 4 we will have the largest roster of boxers ever to appear in a Fight Night game. We will have representation from all over the world, including Australia. Not only boxers, but we will have venues that represent some of the diverse locations that have been used to host big and small fights.

OPS: What is it about Fight Night Round 4 that will make it THE definitive boxing title? BH: From the very beginning our goal

was to make Fight Night Round 4 THE definitive boxing title. Everything we have put into the game is meant to lead to the overall package. From the completely rebuilt fighting engine, which will allow inside fighting, glancing blows and more fluid boxer movement, to the different boxing styles that will have all boxers fighting differently, all of this will contribute to the best in the ring experience to date. A revamped legacy (career) mode and a robust and innovative online experience will add the modes that will ensure gamers will be playing Fight Night Round 4 long after they open the box.

We will have the largest roster of boxers...
We will have representation from all over the world, including

Brian Hayes



#### CUT ME, MICK!

Check out the levels of damage boxers will now absorb and display! It's a marked improvement. Apparently Fight Night Round 3's magic woundhealing iron is gone too.



UNLOCK THE UNIVERSE MARCH 4TH

INCLUDES SEASONS 1-10 OF STARGATE: SG-1™
PLUS THE TWO FEATURE LENGTH EVENTS:

STARGÅTE
TRUTH

STARGÅTE

CONTINUUM

PRESENTED IN STUNNING ALBUM PACKAGING



THE PORTAL COLLECTION



#### SPECIAL FEATURES:

- AUDIO COMMENTARIES
- PISODE PREVIEWS
- FAN CLUB SPOTS
- PROMO CLIPS
- ➤ SG-1 VIDEO DIARIES
- STILLS GALLERIES
- > THE 100TH EPISODE
- > THE 200TH EPISODE
- TRAILERS

#### > FEATURETTES:

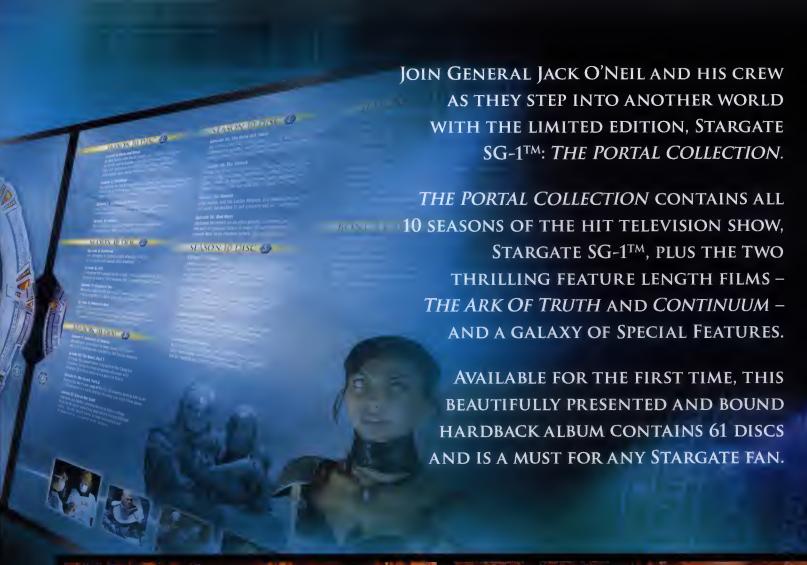
- SG-1 TIMELINE TO THE FUTURE
- SEASON 3: BEHIND THE SCENES
- SG-1 TEAM MEMBER PROFILES
- SECRET FILES OF THE SGC SERIES
- SEASON 5: GATEWAY TO ADVENTURE
- > INSIDE THE TOMB
- DR DANIEL JACKSON: A TRIBUTE
- SG-1 DIRECTORS' SERIES
- > BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR THE LOW DOWN
- SG-1 BEYOND THE GATE SERIES
- PREVIEW TO STARGATE ATLANTIS
- STARGATE SG-1: AN INTRODUCTION TO BEN BROWDER'S FEATURE
- BEHIND THE SCENES SERIES LOOKS AT PRODUCTION DESIGN, PROPS AND SPECIAL EFFECTS
- ARK OF TRUTH PROMO
- CONTINUUM PROMO
- > STARGATE SG-1: TRUE SCIENCE
- ▶ BEHIND THE MYTHOLOGY OF STARGATE SG-1
- THE ARK OF TRUTH: STARGATE AT COMICON
- UNCOVERING THE ARK OF TRUTH
- ➤ STARGATE SG-1: THE ROAD TAKEN:
  PRELUDE TO THE ARK OF TRUTH
- > THE MAKING OF STARGATE CONTINUUM
- > STARGATE GOES TO THE ARCTIC
- > THE LAYMAN'S GUIDE TO TIME TRAVEL

STARGÅTE SG-1



STARGÅTE

SG·1





#### UNLOCK THE UNIVERSE MARCH 4TH



























BOND BLU-RAY AVAILABLE MARCH 18







PS3 GENRE: ACTION/ADVENTURE | RELEASE: TBA | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI | DEVELOPER: ROCKSTEADY STUDIOS | PLAYERS: 1-TBA

# BATMAN: ARKHAM ASYLUM

The game that's a magic pencil trick away from awesomeness...

he magical dust is still settling from the smash-hit movie, The Dark Knight, which has seen the silver screen incarnation of Batman redeemed twice over. And while the internet word is that the failed game adaptation of the film is the reason why Aussie studio Pandemic has fallen into dire financial straits, it does mean that the responsibility of improving the video game representation of Batman has been left squarely at the feet of Rocksteady Studios. Never of heard of Rocksteady? It developed Urban Chaos: Riot Response on PS2. Those of you who never played probably assume it was rubbish. Those that did will know it was one of the best first-person shooters of last

#### **BATMAN RETURNS**

It's been a long time in-between Batdrinks, with the very so-so adaptation of Batman Begins being the last time the Dark Knight visited the gaming world. With the direction the films have taken of late, it's about time that we had a game that respected the source material. And this is where Batman: Arkham Asylum is set to shine. The story is not derived from any particular comic series either, with the game licence allowing Rocksteady to pick and choose from around 70 years of Bathistory. From the new media that has been released over the past couple of months, we can see that the upcoming game is set to be similar in look and style to Escape from Butcher Bay. This, coupled with a twisting storyline that has the fathomable depth of BioShock, and it looks as though Rocksteady are definitely taking the right approach.

They are hard at work trying to create a delicate balancing act between showing the world's greatest detective (a Batman résumé item that many seem to forget about) and bone-crunching melee combat. The third-person over-the-shoulder perspective for the game is reminiscent of the claustrophobic nature of *Dead Space*, but also aids in making you feel like Bruce Wayne's alter ego.

As the title suggests, you'll spend the duration of your game isolated on the island of Arkham Asylum. You're going to be surrounded by super villains and assorted mad henchmen, with only your

gauntlets, gadgets and wits to survive.

#### **BATMAN BEGINS**

It's the subtle points of difference that Rocksteady is bringing to this particular Caped Crusader experience that have us interested. The merging of CSI-like detective work and visceral combat aside, Arkham Asylum is presenting itself as extremely well thought through. For instance, boss combat isn't a mere brawling affair; it takes into account the nemesis you're battling. So if you're facing off against Killer Croc, a 12-foot half man/half crocodile monstrosity, you'll be using your strength to defeat him mano e Batmano. If however, you're battling the Riddler, you'll have to best him by using your wits more-so than your brawn. But the attention to detail doesn't end there.

The Unreal Engine 3 rears its beautiful head to portray Arkham Asylum in all its gritty glory. The asylum doesn't look or feel like a place that's focused on inmate rehabilitation; instead, it's the equivalent of sending a fat kid to a health spa at Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. Arkham is rundown and dingy, with inmates that sport

scars, tattoos and protruding veins, whose impressive detail is surpassed only by their threatening appearance. The Dark Knight himself is just as equally visually appealing with a black and grey armoured Bat-suit that is detailed down to the rivets that hold it all together. Hell, reflective surface or camera angle allowing, you can even see Bruce Wayne's five o'clock shadow.

#### THE DARK KNIGHT

To ensure that you are living and breathing as the Caped Crusader, Arkham Asylum is set to depict the game's hero in all of his elements. Lurking in the shadows is one of Batman's fortes, so naturally this will feature in the game; although Rocksteady is reluctant to call it sneaking. Instead, they're referring to these garneplay instances as 'Predatory Moments'. The logic being that just because you have to be sneaky, it doesn't mean you have to be on the defensive. Downed foes can be used as distractions and even the recorded screams of your victims will allow you to misdirect and outfox your enemies for the ultimate takedowns. The Predatory Moments are even more aptly named as Batman will also





have access to Predator-like vision modes that will allow him to scan areas, identify various enemy weapons, and even track thugs through walls.

Unbeknownst to most, the asylum actually houses a tucked away Bat Cave that allows for upgrades and extended problem solving. The game is also set to feature an RPG-style upgrade system that will allow the player to augment various skill-sets to compliment their preferred playing style. So depending on whether you want to be able to throw multiple Batarangs or have quicker takedowns, will determine where your points are spent. Exploration is also to be rewarded, with extra Bat-toys that can be unlocked by collecting items in hidden rooms.

Needless to say Batman: Arkham
Asylum has a lot of potential to not just be one of the best Batman titles ever created, but also a game that is a must-play for gamers of any fan persuasion and we can hardly wait for its release.

♣ Nathan Lawrence



- Dark and brooding narrative
- ♠ Bone-crunching combat
- You are Batmani

OPS IS...
Observing approvingly





**UFC 2009 Undisputed** 

PS3 GENRE: SPORTS RELEASE: MAY DISTRIBUTOR: THQ DEVELOPER: YUKE'S

### **UFC 2009** UNDISPUTED

Move over WWE...











his is good. UFC 2009 Undisputed piqued our interest some time ago, thanks largely to the fact that a) another Fight Night hadn't been announced at that stage and b) it wasn't WWE. We've been waiting some time to get our hands on it, and we've finally been able to

The best thing we can say about UFC 2009 is that it's exactly what we wanted it be like. When we heard about UFC 2009 we wanted a brutal, fast and highly kinetic fighter - the exact opposite of the somewhat sluggish WWE franchise. We were once told you can wish in one hand and shit in another, and see which one gets filled first, but despite this sage-like piece of advice, UFC 2009 - even at this

stage - does feel like the game it ought to be. And what more can you ask for?

The first thing that struck us about UFC 2009 was that the visual and audio presentation is fantastic (the second thing that struck us was Brock Lesnar. In the face). In screenshots it looks like a bunch of blokes wearing far too little clothing, going crotch-to-face and sweating a lot. In motion it's more than that. Crotchto-face shenanigans are still rife, but the level of detail massaged into every element is impressive. The broadcaststyle presentation seems spot-on, and the dynamic and lively commentary adds greatly to the atmosphere. The fighters even change as the bout goes on; they sweat more and more, bruises and cuts

show up on their bodies (concentrate on the kidneys, for instance, and you'll see your opponent starting to redden and bruise - hit there for greater effect) Fighters even end up with their opponent's blood on their own body.

The impeccable presentation wouldn't mean squat if the controls were bunk, and thankfully they're not. There's a surprising amount of depth here, and players of different skill levels will be able to glean equal amounts of enjoyment from it even though their playstyles will differ. Initially, for instance, you'll likely play it more as a stand-up fighter, wailing on your mate by hammering face button combinations and letting fly with punches and kicks. It's a credit to the game that even three or four repeated right hooks don't look like the same canned punch a few times in a row it really looks as if your fighter is thrashing away, looking for the right strike. Once you master that, however, you can move onto modifying your attacks - high and low attacks, special moves and takedowns can be utilised via the 
and 
buttons. On top of that, the right stick handles the gappling system - which seems difficult as first, but is actually quite intuitive.

What's immediately obvious about

LEC 2009 is that the fact Yuke's has spent the last 10 years churning out WWE titles has had no negative impact on this game whatsoever. In fact, quite the opposite. UFC 2009 strikes us as something of a second wind from Yuke's - something new and different that's obviously benefitted from a lot of rejuvenated passion and the desire to work on something fresh. Yuke's is using a brand new game engine and a separate development team for the game - this isn't a few re-skinned character models having at each other via some increasingly archaic WWE building blocks, this is factory-new.

More as we beat it out of THQ. 4 Luke Reilly

#### SHORTCHANGED

The shortest ever fight in UFC was eight seconds, when light heavyweight opponents James Irvin and Houston Alexander faced each other back in April last year. One devastating haymaker from Irvin put Alexander on the mat, and he only landed one more before match referee Steve Mazzagatti intervened and stopped the fight - declaring it a win for Irvin. It was the fastest KO since Frye vs. Ramirez in 1996.

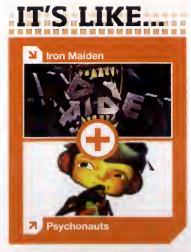
#### WE SAY.

• Fast and devastating

Fantastic presentation

Fight Night Round 4?











PS3 GENRE: ACTION | RELEASE: TBA 2009 | DISTRIBUTOR: EA | DEVELOPER: DOUBLE FINE PRODUCTIONS

**BRUTAL LEGEND** 

When Flying Vs Attack

eavy metal is more than just a type of music, it's a way of living. Sure, there are the clichés of bad dress sense, even worse hair sense and a propensity to stick up 'the horns' at the most socially inappropriate moments. But beneath all that lies a deep appreciation of all things loud, heavy and fast - with optional goat sacrifice.

Brütal Legend could easily have been the kind of title to insult metal fans, but when the man behind the project is Tim Shaffer (creator of Full Throttle, Grim Fandango and Psychonauts) you know that the end product is going to embody a philosophy of high quality design. The first clue that Schafer is indeed a man of metal is the name of Brütal Legend's protagonist, Eddie Riggs (voiced by Jack Black). The first half of this appellation comes from the demonic mascot for heavy metal giants Iron Maiden, with 'Riggs' being the surname of the artist responsible for drawing him, Derek

The metal love doesn't stop there, with a soundtrack comprised of blood-pumping new tracks from the likes of Zack Wylde, Judas Priest, Black Sabbath and Ronnie James Dio, as well as characters voiced by Rob Halford and Motörhead's Lemmy.

As stories go, it's all a little bit ridiculous, but in a good way. Riggs is a roadie who

dreams of doing bigger and better things. When an accident happens backstage, he bleeds on cursed belt buckle and Riggs is transported to an alternate universe full of demons, babes, leather and plenty of rifftastic adventures.

Of course, demons won't die just by looking at them, so Riggs (you) will need to lay into them with a variety of weapons. Your primary killing tool will be a battle axe, but you'll also have access to a Flying V guitar that, when played, can cast various magical spells. What bedroom air guitarist hasn't dreamt of calling up a pyrotechnic attack to enflame their enemies? Or of being able to strum a few notes to summon a vehicle with which to traverse the large, open world they suddenly find themselves in?

Even the game's enemies have a metal slant to them, comprising of Headbangers,

Roadies, Runaways and Bouncers. Brütal Legend has had a bit of a wonky publishing history and at the time of writing Activision is trying to regain a slice of the profits pie, but we're confident that

when the game eventually sees the light of release it will be one of the more original and unique titles to grace consoles

this year. 4 Dylan Burns

#### WE SAY

Tiaming flying V

Metal voices

Too niche?

OPS IS. Throwing the horns

#### THE OPS GUIDE TO **BEING METAL**

1. Grow your hair and die it black. 2. Sit in a room for three days listening to most, if not all, of the various metal genres and sub-genres.

3. Always keep your face towards the ground and answer all questions with monosyllabic replies. 4. Buy a T-shirt of your favourite metal band.

5. Start a metal band and make sure the name includes 'Metal'. Examples: Mega Metal, Metal Metal, Thunder Metal and Metal Meat Marathon.



PS3 GENRE: ACTION | RELEASE: TBA 2009 | DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT | DEVELOPER: DARKWORKS

# X-MENORIGINS: WOLVERINE

It's bigger, bloodier, and better than we imagined: our hands-on report



o control Wolverine is to take command of a one-man-army — and a one-man abattoir. Our half-hour hands-on session left a powerful impression, of a game that is destined to make a million adolescent power fantasies come true. The edgiest member of the X-Men may not be the next God of War, but he's certainly a Count of War. Maybe even a Duke.

Levels are linear, but combat is free-form. If left alone long enough, Wolverine's mutant healing ability will let him recover from any damage. His problem, of course, is that he is never left alone. From the lowliest African mercenaries all the way up to towering, near-indestructible Sentinel robots, someone always wants a piece of him. The trick then is to take control; to tear into the forces of evil on your own terms.

This means combos. Brutal, brutal combos. Your basic evisceration is the

Quick Kill: grab an enemy with the circle button, then tap triangle twice. At this point Wolverine might, say, stab right into their neck, and drag his claws right down to the bottom of their torso. Or simply slice straight through their waist, chopping them into two meaty chunks. Or any number of other atrocities; each basic enemy type in the game has several unique ways to die.

Remember that Punisher game Volition made for the PS2? Remember how there were unique environmental means of torture and murder? Wolverine has a similar feature, only he's not interested in information. He simply likes to kill, and if a spike protruding from a wall or floor makes the exercise that little bit easier, all the better.

If enemies are scattered about a level, pouring assault rifle fire into our hero, it behooves the player to rub them out quickly. This is where the Lunge Attack comes in handy — a simple command that

makes Wolverine leap huge distances in an instant. Simply hold down to lock on; this will highlight the arc through the air that he'll take. It's shaped like a rainbow, only instead of a pot of gold at the other end, there's a man who's about to get his face sliced off. Then, with a tap of the Logan springs into action, and in less than a second he's carving up another sinner like a Sunday roast.

Down on the D-pad brings up the Feral Sense, a sort of Predator vision with applications in navigation and combat. While the colour palette makes things fairly clear (this isn't one of those games where everything is rendered in poo brown), a quick sniff from Logan's animal instincts can make a melee encounter go that little bit smoother.

The attention to detail? Phenomenal. A studio of die-hard Marvel fans, Raven has crafted the most true-to-life depiction of this hairy anti-hero to date. His dog tags are



X-Men Origins: Wolverine

#### INTERVIEW

#### THE X FACTOR

A few words with Dan Vondrak, project lead on X-Men Origins: Wolverine

OPS: Can you tell us about the upgrades you've made to the Unreal 3 engine?

DV: The combat system is 100% brand new. Rendering wise, it hasn't changed. Physicswise, it hasn't changed. But we've got an entire layer of what we call the Combat Node system. It allows us to do all that crazy stuff you saw.

**OPS:** It's strictly single-player?

DV: Yes, it is a single-player game. We threw the idea on – 'hey, can we do something multi-player? Can we do something co-op?' But we felt like that would lose our focus. We could do it, but we were just focused on making the best Wolverine game ever. It just didn't feel like it fit the character.

You're able to level up your character. You're able to take your leveled-up character and go back re-play any of the missions you want. You can continues to level up the character whether you've beaten the game or not, so there's extra replayability that way, as well.

OPS: We've got some ruthless censors in Australia. Do you think the visible internal organs (as he accrues damage in combat) will be a problem?

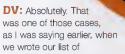
DV: Honestly, from my perspective, I can't imagine it is [a problem]. We were faced with a lot of questions early on when we made the game. We said 'look, either we're gonna do this, or we're not. This is how we envision Wolverine.' On our board of 'What If We Made The Best Ever Wolverine Game' it never said 'BLOODY.'

It was never about making it bloody. It was about being true to the character.

We literally posted up pictures from the comic books, and we'd see that stuff in the comic books. You see him doing more stuff than we've ever done in any of our games in the comic books, in terms of brutality. It was making those pages come to life.

I personally don't see it as a problem, and if you're a Wolverine fan at all, you've seen it in the comics, and that's what the game is all about.

OPS: One advantage of games over movies is that you can get away with stuff that would look preposterous in a motion picture.



If This is Gonna Be The Best Wolverine Game Ever, What Do You Have To Have?, and a fight with a 200-foot-tall Sentinel was top of the list.

That's one of those moments that has nothing to do with the movie, but we said 'We're getting it in there! We're gonna work the story around it!', and actually, truthfully, the story really works together really beautifully, with the movie story. It seems seamless. If no-one's ever seen the movie story, they're gonna get the full story of the movie, and it's honestly going to seem seamless.

#### OPS: Have you worked in as much of the good stuff from the comics as possible?

**DV:** The knowledge base here at Raven is unbelievable, when it comes to Wolverine. We love the character, back from the Barry Windsor Smith cover, when he's on top of a pile of bodies, and he's got one guy up in the air — that was one of our inspirations for some of the different Quick Kills you see in the game.

We've been on X-Men, and X-Men Legends 1 & 2, and Marvel Ultimate Alliance now for six years, and we've read stacks and stack of comics. It's all about getting it right...

People bring in their DVDs [of the cartoon shows], people bring in their TiVo clips... we just take inspiration from everything Wolverine.

#### OPS: Have there been heated discussions from the Comic Store Guys on your staff? 'No, he'd never do that!'

**DV:** Haha! Tons and tons and tons. The big ones came when — we wanted to show the other side of Wolverine. He's a brutal killer, for sure, but he's also got this moral side to him. He can regret what he's done. He sees the killing as a necessary evil, almost.

Among other things it was getting the bone claws right — making sure the bone claws looked right. Getting the dog tags right. First they started off painted-on, and the hard-core fans in Raven were like "No! They HAVE to bounce around! It's a huge part of him!" So, they look awesome now.

#### OPS: There's a lot of stigma out there, that movietie games are abominable. What would you say to fans that might have some misgivings?

**DV:** I hear a lot of times, people go 'oh, another rushed movie game.' This is the exact opposite. We were supposed to be finished with this game originally in May 2008. Pretty much by December 2007 we had completed the game. And then the movie got delayed another year, so it was like 'Oh my God! We've got a WHOLE YEAR just to polish this game!' That's unheard-of in the industry...

We don't make a game, and think the licence is going to make the game. The big thing for us is, 'is it a fun game by itself? Is it just a blast to play the game?' And the licence should just add to it – and that's exactly what we've done here...

We're fans. We're not going to let Wolverine down!





### HEROES OVER EUROPE

Spit on Nazi fuggers with your Spitfire

at-tat-tat-tat-tat! OPS recently meandered our way into an Atari den-o-games and found ourselves dogfighting in an era when pilots laid pipe like Super Mario, cigarettes were cool, and those bastard Nazis were still tossing off over the prospect of ruling the world. We'd barrel rolled our way into Heroes Over Europe.

It doesn't take a Da Vinci-like imagination to weave together what Heroes Over Europe has in store. There are allied WWII planes, enemy fighters piloted by baby-eating Nazis, sky, bullets, familiar European locales below, and a whole lot of animosity. But calling it a flight sim would be off the mark.

Rather Heroes Over Europe is an

arcade shooter dressed to look like one of your granddaddy's beige pants. All the inane sim stuff has been given the royal arse. Taking off and landing – absent; cockpit view with a gazillion dials – nowhere to be seen; rigid laws of aerodynamics – nope, not here either.

Replacing all these authentic bits and pieces is fancy arcade confetti filler, and from what we played they're all set to put the wham in the wham-bam and sweeten what's shaping to be a tight boutique shooter. For one, the game does a good job of packing the air space with hordes of craft. While it doesn't have the density of a swarm of mosquitoes, it's lively enough to impart a nice sense of paranoia. "Is somebody on my six?" Probably.

Then there's the Ritalin-dodging gunplay. Further burning the bridge of authenticity, each craft is capable of using Energy Attack and Ace Kill abilities - guaranteed to make players feel larger in the pants than a life's supply of junk mail knob pills. The former ramps up the ferocity of attacks when dive bombing at enemies from above, while the latter does Max Payne in the air. Provided players can keep a lock on their target long enough, they'll zoom into the vulnerable parts of an enemy's craft in slow motion and get the chance to take them out with a single bullet. What's more, good players can chain these Ace Kills back-to-back while dealing out murder to several craft in a row.

With over 40 vintage planes available

and sprawling recreations of some of the iconic theatres of war, including London and Berlin, *Heroes Over Europe* is set to throw solid measures of quick-draw idiocy and authenticity into the blender.

♣ James Ellis



#### **GHOSTBUSTERS III?**

While the idea that this is Ghostbusters III seems, well, wrong, Dan Akroyd might just believe it. Akroyd had been trying for years to get a third Ghostbusters film happening but was confronted with a myriad of issues. The budget would've been huge, the availability of the principal cast would have proved tough to align, and finally they're now all old buggers who couldn't catch a bed sheet. Akroyd's solution was to pitch it as a CG film, but when he was approached to help make the game he saw it as the perfect







**EXCOMING** 

**Ghostbusters** 





PS3 GENRE: ACTION | RELEASE: JUNE 2009 | DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI | DEVELOPER: TERMINAL REALITY

# **GHOSTBUSTERS**

"No one steps on a church in my town..."

e've played Ghostbusters. So there. Knowing how madly obsessed we are with one of the greatest horror/comedy/buddy/adventure films of the '80s, Atari recently gave us a small primer of this retro rattler that provided a good indication of the final product.

Anyone who's been following the development of *Ghostbusters* knows that Dan Akroyd has christened it the "third *Ghostbusters*" movie. That's hyperbolic marketing tosh of course but *Ghostbusters* at least feels like a genuine article. Aside from the voice acting of Bill Murray, Dan Akroyd, Harold Ramis, and Ernie Hudson, which we've previously raved about, many of the missions in the game emulate seminal scenes from the films. That's a good thing.

Our demo kicked us off in a hotel reminiscent of the first ghostbusting sequence in the original blockbuster. Here we got our trusty PKE Meter and slipped into a first-person mode. Like in the films the meter opens up its wings when it smells ghost, which led us on a supernatural hunt as we scanned bits of slime scattered throughout the hotel hallway. Eventually the trail of burst chip packets and green wall fudge led us downstairs to the lobby where we ran into an onslaught of grumpy, dead bellhops looking for a pummelling.

And the people rejoiced. After a fairly long period of snooping about it was time to break out the proton packs. As it turned out the bellhops were one of two basic types of ghosts present in the

game in that they required wrangling and entrapment rather than a swift burst of proton lovin'. Fortunately there was fun to be had softening these spectres up. Apart from feeling like you're roping in a marlin, we were able to slam them around the environment, and cause massive damage, before tossing out a trap and sucking these free spirits into a containment unit that would make a spelunker feel claustrophobic.

Soon afterwards we burst into a huge ballroom, complete with chandeliers and dinner tables, and took on Slimer. We weren't privy to how this green glutton escaped the *Ghostbusters* to return here (the game is set years after *Ghostbusters II*) but we were all too happy to rough him up by flinging him about the room, destroying

everything and anything posh and pricy, before going for the pin.

Ghostbusters may not bat Grand Theft Auto IV off the action throne on release, but it's sure to include enough in-jokes, familiar situations, and comedic lines to keep fans busting to the end. 

James Ellis







Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood will be

hitting store shelves this winter. 4 James

Cottee

OPS IS.

Circling the wagons!

dictate your style of play. Ray McCall excels

in close combat; he's adept at dual wielding

revolvers, and also a dab hand with heavy

Gatling Guns.

Built on version four of the Chrome

Engine, BiB will support huge and dynamic



# 10% OFF NEW RELEASE GAMES

CD WOW! is excited to offer the readers of Official PlayStation a special 10% discount on a selection of the best new release games like Resident Evil 5, Killzone 2 and SKATE 2!

**CD WOW!** is a leading online entertainment retailer specialising in providing top quality CDs, DVDs and Games. Their range includes not only the best releases, but also an extensive back catalogue. **CD WOW!** pride themselves on their commitment to their customers and the low prices they offer, coupled with **FREE** delivery!

For more information on the daily discounts and to get your 10% discount on the top games everyday over the next month head to www.gameplayer.com.au and click on the *CD WOW!* Members only tab.

For more visit: cdwow.com.au/go/gameplayer









PSS GENRE: ACTION RELEASE: TBA 2009 DISTRIBUTOR: SONY DEVELOPER: SCE SANTA MONICA PLAYERS: 1

**GOD OF WAR III** 

Of Titanic proportions...

n 100 years, when the disembodied brains that were once games reviewers sit in their pickle jars and look back at the history of gaming, Kratos will sit uncontested on his throne as the greatest action character ever. This we predict. And from what we've seen of God of War III, it doesn't look like we'll be labelled as liars anytime soon.

The first thing we can chalk down as a given is that the game will look spectacular. Both of the previous games managed to make the PS2 positively shine in the graphics department (not to mention the awesome PSP title), so with the move to the PS3 we can expect a sharper, high-res and more effects-laden experience, the kind that only an in-house production can supply (with the possible exception of anything made by Hideo Kojima). We can expect Kratos to be his unhappy self, an anti-hero even your

grandmother could relate to. And we can also expect the action dial to be turned way past eleven.

With new hardware comes the ability to Increase the epic scale that the God of War series has so successfully managed. How epic? Well, if the latest trailer is anything to go by, Kratos will find himself negotiating entire levels upon the backs of titans - a la Shadow of the Colossus, but on an even grander scale. At one moment you will be fighting on a horizontal plane, only to have the titan move and change the entire level to a vertical perspective. The scale at which levels will take place. as Kratos moves across the various titans in his mission to destroy the gods atop Mount Olympus, looks incredibly

Casting our gaze over Kratos's move set, God of War III offers some interesting new gameplay elements. The first of these is Kratos's new ability to straddle beasts, mounting them and using them to his advantage in battle. Possible mounts include cyclopes and harpies. The former you can use to cut a swathe of destruction across the battlefield and the latter to reach places only a winged creature can explore. You will need to go about it quickly, though, as Kratos is far from gentle





**WORDS: JAMES COTTEE** 

Doom is generally regarded as the granddaddy of all first-person shooters, but this isn't entirely true. One year before Doom was released came Wolfenstein 3D, and along with it the birth of an entire genre. Anticipating the rise of a new way of playing action games, Wolfenstein 3D is the first-person shooter that begun all first-person shooters. And now it's back. Again.

irst things first: the main character is called William 'B.J.' Blazkowicz. We don't know how he got his nickname. We don't WANT to know. All you need to know about B.J. is that he kills Nazis — and he's the best there is at what he does.

Seriously, that's all there is to it. If you didn't play Return to Castle Wolfenstein, or Wolfenstein 3D, you're not missing out on anything. This isn't Metal Gear, and Raven isn't Hideo Kojima. There's no baggage, no hang-ups, and no beating around the bush: you're plugging fascists right from the get-go.

Granted, some leitmotifs return, as does the odd character. For the veterans, these familiar trappings will offer the same warm, glowing feeling you get when you return to the town you grew up in and drive an expensive car slowly down the

main street. "Check it OUT, dawgs. I hit the BIG TIME."

But newcomers will be able to pick it all up as they go along. B.J. is investigating a remote German city where strange goings-on have been transpiring. The Krauts have dug up a supply of a mysterious new element with astonishing properties. It has made death rays, power armour, and all manner of Nazi death machines possible. It could turn the tide of the war.

That's where you come in. With a ragtag band of resistance fighters at your side, your mission is to investigate and thwart this threat, using the Nazi's own weapons against them.

Keeping in mind that the last Wolfenstein game came out almost a decade ago, the basic gameplay model has been enhanced to keep with the

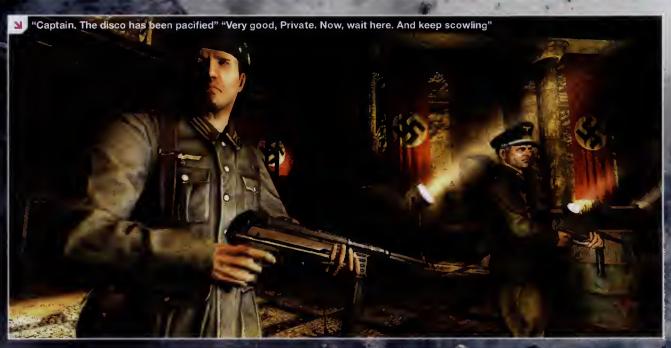


#### DEPTH

Wolfenstein







trial, and reloading is an ordeal. Use it for any amount of time, and you will crave a stripper clip to improve its rate of fire, and a sniper scope to cut down on those painful misses.

You'll start plotting how to afford its improved rifling, its silencer, and its bayonet — just the thing for close encounters.

Lean towards the MP40 submachine gun, on the other hand, and you'll be squirreling away looted Nazi goblets for a drum magazine and a bigger bore. You will never be left wondering if a particular upgrade was worth it — there's always be a noticeable stat boost.

These features are par for the course, but things really get interesting when you factor in the Veil: B.J.'s new magical amulet. The Veil lets B.J. access a haunted dimension that sits atop our own, where ghosts and demons dwell. It serves as a Predator-style false colour view for highlighting enemies and their weak spots.

The Veil also lets you shoot through walls. Keep an eye out for Black Sun symbols scrawled here and there — each

is a hint that turning on the Veil will let you warp reality to your advantage.

The Veil has other powers, too You can slow down time; allowing you to make a mockery of the Nazis' tactics — or just run right up to them and shoot them in the face. Since each is activated by a directional tap of the D-pad, we've been led to believe that the Veil has at least two more powers. The specifics are unknown, but at a wild guess we'd say they make killing Nazis easier and more satisfying.

Gameplay elements are both old and new; de rigeur and unexpected. There are points where you find yourself manning a machine gun nest for a minute or two, gunning down dozens of Krauts from a fixed position. Once you get the disintegrator, you can take that kind of firepower with you.

Red barrels explode when you shoot them, but so do the wispy little ghost squid things you can sometimes see through the Veil. Resistance fighters help you along the way, but for once (and perhaps the first time) they're actually the German resistance — driven to rebellion

by the tyranny of the National Socialists.

This game has the potential to surprise and delight, but without straying too far from your comfort zone.

As a footnote, we'd like to address those who complain that there are 'too many WWII games.' In this instance, we have three basic rebuttals to that assertion. Firstly, Wolfenstein may be set during WWII, but it is NOT a wWII game. Hello: disintegrators? Nazl zombles? This is a lot closer to Indiana Jones than Enemy at the Gates.

Secondly, it's not as if developers aren't being innovative with the subject matter — just look at Velvet Assassin and Battlestations Pacific.

Thirdly: get stuffed. This conflict gets so many movies, games, and books dedicated to it because it was the best war ever, with the best bad guys ever. If you don't enjoy shooting Nazis, then you clearly have some sort of emotional detachment from the rest of humanity, and should do what Dexter Morgan does: keep your mouth shut.

To summarise: Wolfenstein is one B.J. we're looking forward to.

MULTINE Science, an

Eric Biessman, Creative Director

How are you managing the Wolfenstein legacy? How are you bringing it up to date for the kids of today?

Wolfenstein has a near and dear spot in my heart. So when we found out that id was ready to create a new game, and we happened to be free, and it all worked out — the stars aligned and we got to work together, I was very excited about it.

There's a little bit of 'Gosh! we love this license!' Wolf 3D really opened a new boundary for me, 'cause I was into Bard's Tale, and Kings Quest, and these games that were more thinking, and you know, moving around clicking. And all of a sudden, here's this game where I'm SHOOTING A GUN and it's all about ACTION. It pretty much put me down the path of where I am today, as a gamer.

Knowing that there's this pedigree that we're working on, it opened a lot of questions for us. 'Cause obviously, we want to be nostalgic for the people that have played the previous games, but we want to hit this new audience.

So, there's a lot of things that came up. And I guess the first thing we did was we sat down, and we brainstormed: 'what are things that people hold near and dear from Wolf 3D and Return to Castle Wolfenstein?' Obviously, the core gameplay needs to stay. As an action combat game, it needs to have the conventional weapons and the big explosions.

The second thing was that we wanted to keep some of the gameplay mechanics beyond that. I can remember spending hours holding the space bar down, looking for all the secrets in Wolf 3D, and I have very fond memories of that. And in Return to Castle Wolfenstein they had the treasure, but it didn't really do anything more than that. So when it came to our game, we were like 'Hey! Why don't we take this, and make it really worthwhile to the game.' So we decided to add the economy system, and allow players to turn in this cash that they're finding these relics and these gold bars and upgrade the player.

Because it all comes back to that feeling-powerful-action-combat. It all tied together. So, those were two of the main things. Now on top of that, you look back to Return to Castle Wolfenstein, and there's some key characters and weapons that we felt defined Return to Castle Wolfenstein. I can't really give you specifics, but you can expect to find some weapons and characters from the previous games in this iteration; just to tie it all together.

As far as coming up with something new, it's always been about the dark

science, and the big guns, and fighting Nazis. We wanted to make sure we gave a really compelling story, and that the game is really driven by the story. We also wanted to let B.J. have a new playground. Let the players have a new playground. And that's where we brought in the idea of the Veil. It's a window into the occult, into the paranormal, that B.J. can step into, and use to his advantage.

It adds a layer onto the combat. It gives you a little bit more of a boost. We didn't want it to overwhelm the combat. We didn't want it to just be about using the Veil, because at its core Wolfenstein is about BIG GUNS and fast action.

#### Will you be able to eat dog food to get health back?

As we were working on the game, we started out with that as one of the conventions. Dog food, turkey dinners... things like that. But as the game expanded, and we said you know what? We want to kind of break the mold of just linear corridors and combat, and linear driving' we added the City to it. And in the city, you can go out on the street, and you can search for collectibles, and you can find characters to talk to, you can go to safe houses, and find out information about the story, and get new missions... and you can spend a lot of time just going around the city and doing different things like that.

So it's a bit more open world? It's a little bit, I guess. It's not a true open world. But it's an expansive environment. It's enough where, if you were playing the game, it got to the point of annoyance, because you would get into a combat, and then instead of progressing, you would be like 'oh, I have to go find dog food.' Or, 'I have to go find health.' So, we originally had it, and it was just one of those things that as the gameplay came together, it was one thing we decided wouldn't work as well as regenerating. Sorry: it wasn't an 'annoyance.' It was a challenge. But we had better challenges that we wanted to put in front of the player as opposed to [hunting for health packs]. We want the story to progress, and we want players to feel like they're moving forward. It slowed down the action. It worked against our vision of what the game should be.

The Veil can give you a second sight, and slow down time — what else can it do?

There's multiple powers that you're going to be able to get in the game, and there's the base amulet. What the amulet does is it lets you step in and out of the Veil. It's not like you're physically going from reality into a new

place. It's more of a perception. A wall that may seem solid in reality, you step into the Veil, and see: 'Oh! It's not there! Now I can go around and flank these Nazis that are at this machine gun post.'

And vice versa. I can be walking down a hallway and I step into the Veil, and 'Oh, crap! There's a creature floating right in front of me!' At that point, it's just about the medallion. So as you're going through the game, you're gonna also find these powers. The one we talked about today was called 'Meier.' It tweaks with time. It slows down time around you, it lets you dodge bullets, it lets you get through obstacles that the Nazis may have in place.

There's a trend these days where a lot of games don't get demos...

We had a discussion about that. Because demos sometimes make you NOT buy the game, and that's the opposite of what it should do. So our demo will be awesome.

Is there a bit of a Lovecraftian influence in there, with the interdimensional monsters?

I will admit that I am a huge fan of H P Lovecraft. Maybe subconsciously it seeped in, but it really came down to gameplay first. We knew we wanted to give some sort of window into the occult — the dark stuff. One of our programmers was working on something, and we were like 'Damn! That's cool!' And it evolved into it.

So there are still happy accidents in game design?

Definitely. If you're developing a game, and you stick with everything that you've written down at the beginning, you will not be happy with your game. You have to be flexible.

Do you think people will ever get sick of shooting Nazis?

I don't! They're the ultimate bad guy. To turn the tables, what did you think when you got the Particle Cannon in your hands, did that get old?

That didn't get old. No. [Wistfully remembers disintegrating hordes of Nazis].

It's a good feeling.

#### DEPTH

How To Make A Bad Game

#### HOW TO MAKE A

# BABE

Yeah, you read that correctly. Want to make a game tedious and frustrating? Friends, you've come to the right place! Read on!

here have been some spectacular games in the last few months.

Killzone 2, Dead Space, Resident

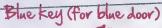
Evil 5, Skate 2 and Resistance 2 just to name a few. Tidy titles all.

And that's a problem. Because if all the games that come out are good... where does the award-winning writing team at OPS vent its spleen, spewing forth shallow, caustic wit?

Try making sarcastic comments at a good game; "Yeah, Kilizone 2, you erm... are crap with your awesome graphics and online... BAH!"

You just can't do it.

So for young, upstart companies, maybe even one of you readers, we've comprised a list of things a crappy game needs. And then we can stop liking so many games!





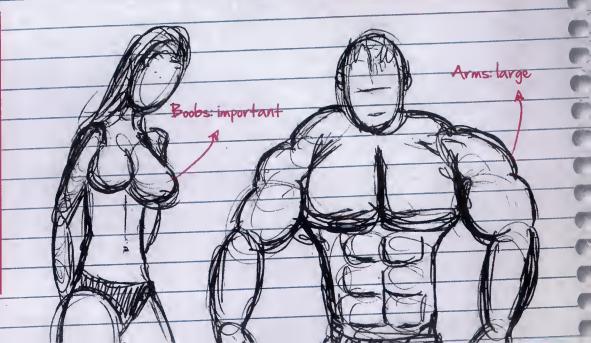
#### STEP 1

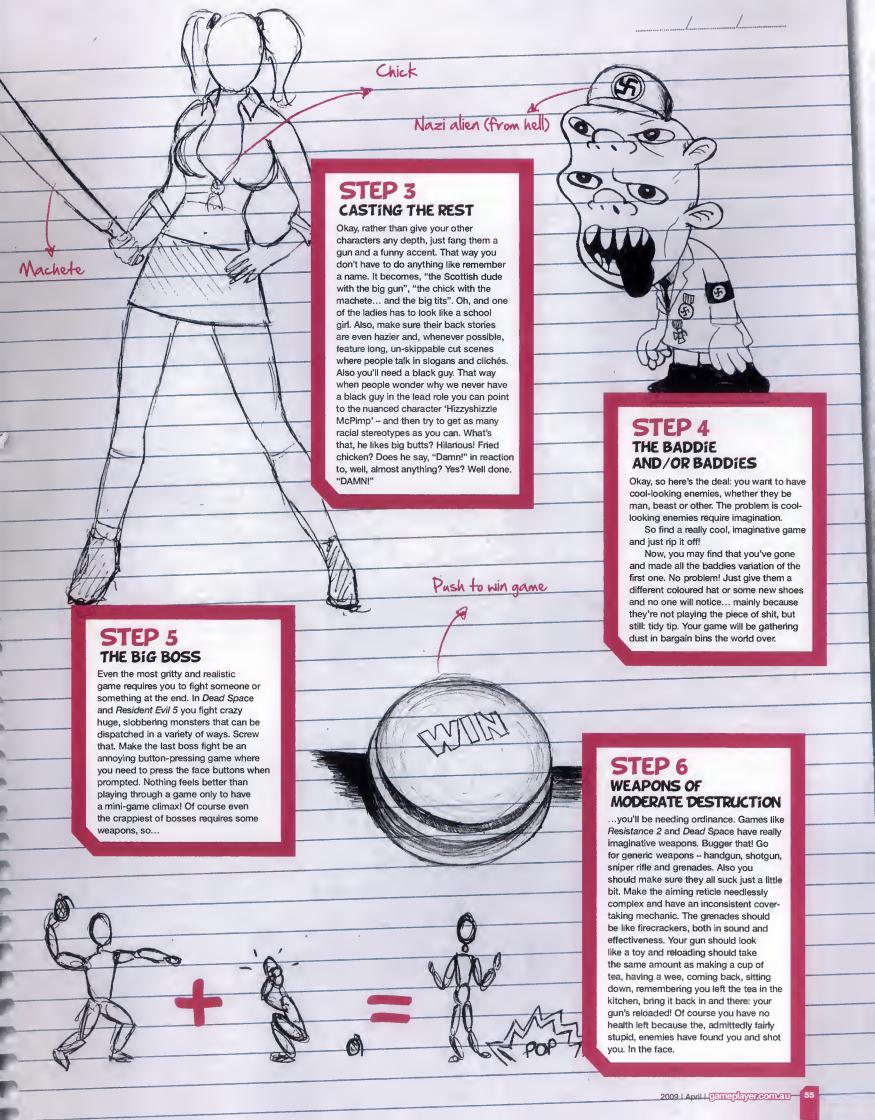
#### PICK A GENRE,

Well the first thing you'll need to know is what type of game this is. Is it a survival horror? If so, make sure there are lots of blue key for blue door moments. There's nothing gamers like more than backtracking, trying to find a key that – for no reason at all – is in a locked room. FPS? Make sure endless drab corridors are punctuated with a firefight and then more shuffling along. Oh! And make sure there are heaps of jumping bits! FPS' on the whole have god-awful jumping physics so keep that dream alive and make jumping up a step feel like moving a couch with a ham sandwich.

#### STEP 2 CASTING THE LEAD

Being that games are focused mainly on the bloke market you can appeal to two things in the male mind: sex and death. So if your main character is a woman she's feisty, acrobatic, explores tombs, has big tits. Don't actually develop her as a character but spend all the time getting the breast physics just right. Level design be buggered! Oh, and if your protag's a dude he has to be one hardcore melon farmer. Give him a scar or two, a dark past and access to a weapons cache and you've got your hero. Just give him a vague backstory, of the "village was destroyed and the boy lived to [yawn] take rerange rev- re revenge... yeah, thassit zzzzzzzzzzzzzzz..."



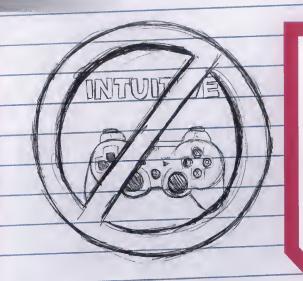


#### IN DEPTH

How To Make A Bad Game

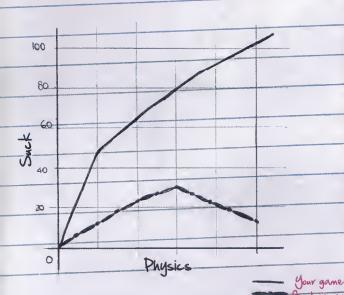
# STEP 7 "WE HAVE 'MEGAZORT' AI, IT'S GOING TO CHANGE THE GAMING WORLD."

To make a bad game even worse you need to get people's hopes up before you crush them, like a family of cockroaches. Words get bandied about like "Adaptive", "Human-like reactions" and the ever popular: "The NPC's act like they would in real life." Ahhh yes, the number of times we've seen a bloke walking into a wall, or someone with no legs float or the 'baddie's feet not touching the ground'. Make sure you have enough cool footage for a trailer. It'll be like Lair all over again!



#### STEP 8 CONTROL FREAK

Over time certain controls have become default for games. Third-person adventure, platform games and even FPS' are starting to fall into line. Stop that right now! We don't want people enjoying intuitive controls so they can simply kick back and enjoy the game. We want people to fall out of the zone as often as possible. And in the name of little baby Jeebus don't let the player adjust their own controller to the buttons they want. What's that all about? It's madness, pure madness. Are you trying to make a GOOD game or something?



#### STEP 9 PHYSICS 101

The physics engine of a game is really its bony endoskeleton. If it's been put together well you'll actually feel like you're in the game. But hold on a minute. You're making a bad game.

Can't have that.

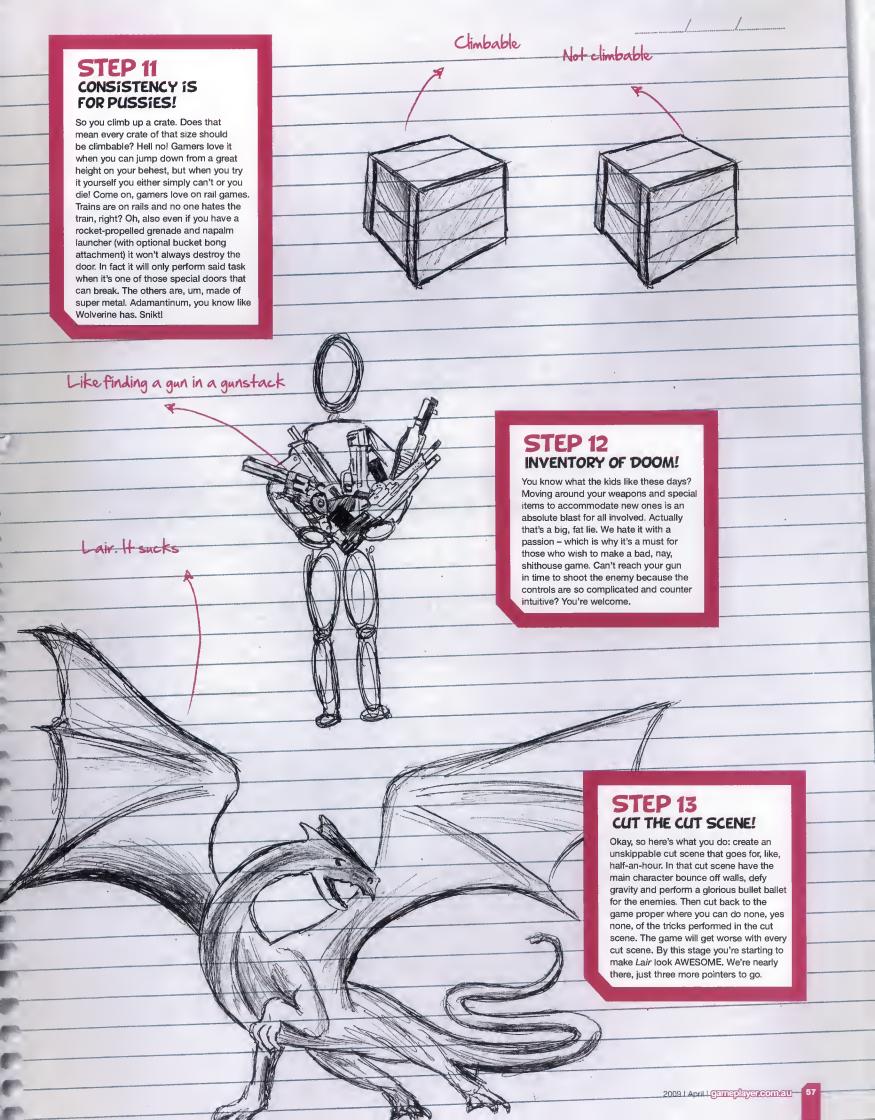
So if you're near a cliff, say, turning around will make you fall off. Want more? Okay, your enemies will often fall into a wall, their bottom half poking out of the wall like a morning stiffy. Other crap physics include invisible walls, bad collision detection and the old favourite: "I can't bloody jump over this log, when I just vaulted the fence! What gives?"

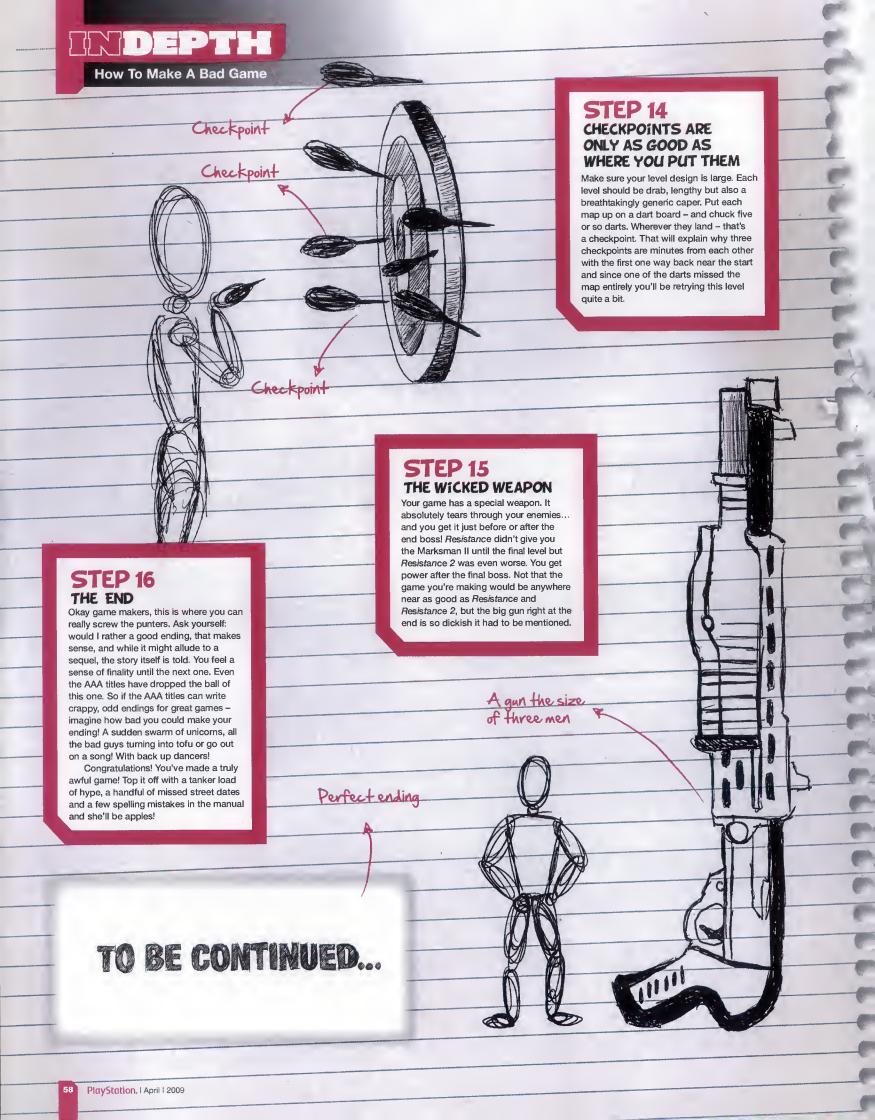
#### Wheelchairs = scary



Slow motion martial arts, watching the bullet find its destination, monsters that have to be hit in a certain area to kill - all clichés. Now, most people will forgive a game a cliché or two. Say you have to snipe your enemies who are chasing your partner in the distance: cool beans. But put all the clichés together and it's insanely boring. For example: you're a hard, rough, alcoholic who lost his family under mysterious circumstances. Your partner/friend/relative ends up dead and you have to even the score. Yep. Sounds good (slumps in seat). Oh, one more thing: people, the olde timey wheelchair has lost its spookiness. So throw them around everywhere. No one will be creeped out, and in fact may snigger at your breathtaking lack of imagination.









# STUCK FOR A GIFT IDEA?

#### Get a magazine subscription, The gift that lasts all year!

Subscribing is easy, it is a great gift, you save \$\$\$ and there are even chances to win great prizes.

For all the latest prices & offers go to:

**ONLINE:** www.derwenthoward.com.au/subs

**PHONE:** 136 116





Singularity



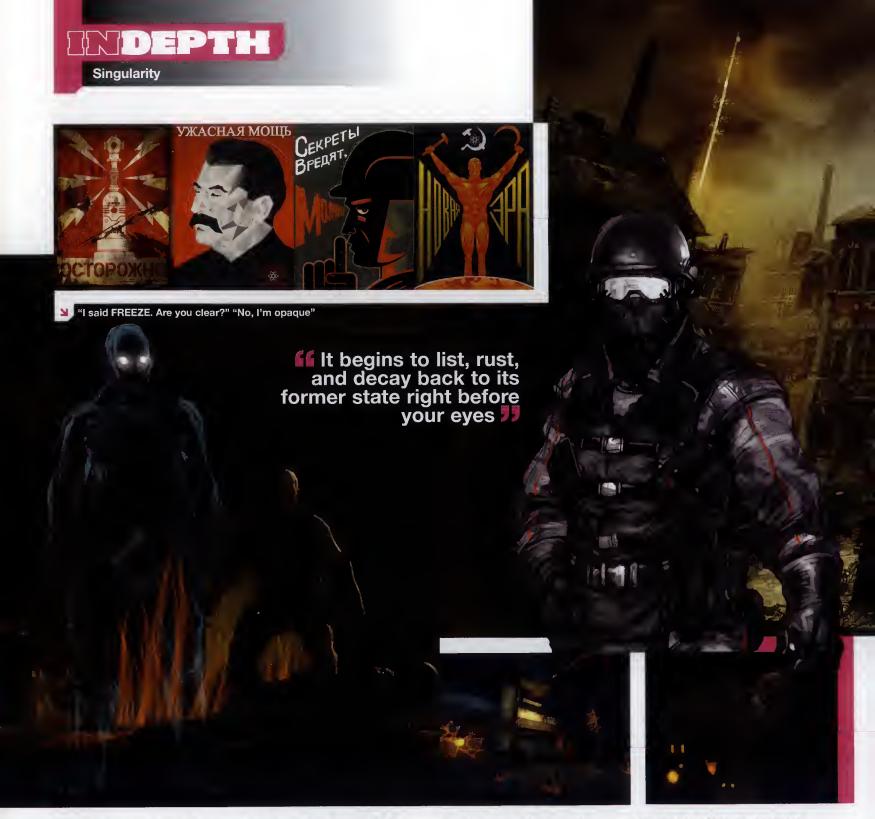


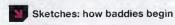
James Cottee

# BACKTO THE LEGISLAND FUNDING FUNDING STATES

Another FPS that reminds us there aren't enough hours in the day...









never dead. It's not even past.' One minute, you can be walking down an abandoned dockyard on a rainswept night, and the next, a gust of blue energy, a Time Wave, will have swept the entire level back to a bright sunny day in the 1950s. The paint is immaculate, the crates brand new, and the Soviet soldiers not particularly interested in learning why you're trespassing in their top secret compound. They're quite happy just to shoot you.

But why ARE you there? As the US Air Force spy plane pilot Nate Renko, you were on a routine recon mission. This place must be something of a Bermuda Triangle, as you crash land and get swept up in a conspiracy in short order. People and places

have been swept out of time and space, swinging through eras like an unstoppable pendulum. And from beyond reality, horrifying plants and animals are seeping through, slaying everything in their path. Talk about the dangers of introduced species...

For now, the plot remains a mystery wrapped in a riddle inside an enigma, but the game mechanics couldn't be clearer. The TMD's powers work anywhere on a small scale, but you'll occasionally come across special equipment (plot devices?) that can dramatically boost its power. In the midgame level we were shown, that meant raising a huge metal cargo ship from the bottom of the harbour, and restoring it to like-new condition.

To add tension as you run through

it searching for a McGuffin, it begins to list, rust, and decay back to its former state right before your eyes.

Within the ship we saw demonstrations of two other key gameplay features. First, how the enemy factions can be persuaded to fight amongst themselves. In this case, that meant pitting the Spetsnaz against the Phase Ticks, horrid orange-glowing insects that spawn from creeping energy scabs that can grown on any flat surface.

We also witnessed some fourdimensional puzzle-solving. An area might seem inaccessible, until you figure out how to use a nearby piece of gear to open up a portal through time, whence you can fiddle with the past to massage the present. We've



CW: Absolutely, it was. At the time, we were working with Activision, and challenged with developing, potentially, a few new IPs. So, 'let's develop several. Let's pick the one that fares the best out of that startup development.' So we had a scout team develop a few ideas for titles. Singularity was green-lit to bring into a rough gameplay development stage, and two or three months on that with a skeleton crew - a very small staff --- and just the basic promise of converting a world, and working back and forth between two eras: one abandoned, and one highly active, with a lot of people who don't want you to be there, was what really sold Raven and Activision.

#### S: What inspirations dld you draw

CW: For the visuals, we were -and this is really at the immediate outset of the project - fascinated with the recent trend of people going into abandoned locations and photographing them. So the creative founder of the project, Steve Raffle, and I just PORED over hordes of those internet images, and books, and we collected a massive assortment of locations that were huge, massive, and yet today no-one was inhabiting them. So, it ranged from factories to bunkers to entire islands, and that really played perfectly into the concept of the game. But our obsession over how things looked when they were abandoned was really what sold us on the concept of abandonment — and the kind of solace that goes with it as being a cornerstone of the visual qualities of the project.

It didn't take too much longer to go to some of those abandoned locations in Russia that were just above and beyond in their massive scale.

CW: There's so much reference on the internet that we were really able to choose between eras from the '50s,

to World War II photographs of things that have been destroyed, and we were able to research on the internet how they look today.

So it didn't actually require that much travel. And ultimately, our goal was not to create a specific place, but first and foremost, a feeling, and then secondarily the idea that you were in a Russian location. But we wanted to push the reality to a point where it was good enough to be... close to that. It felt real. But it was truly fantastic.

#### **44** Working back and forth between two eras, and one highly active... was what really sold Raven and

CW: Visually, there were certainly things that we felt weren't done effectively in those other titles. Whether it be from character design, to sense of place, to petty artistic things like textural detail and effects. Those were the parts of the puzzle that myself and the Singularity art team picked apart, and decided how to push into a better direction, compared to the competition.

#### OPS: What led to the design of the

CW: Speaking strictly in visual terms, an initial obsession of ours, in addition to this abandoned aesthetic, was pulling from the sci-fi Hollywood genre - the classic genre that built up in

art, but base it on aesthetics that were in most cases very simple. So, the TMD itself was something that we knew we wanted to be based in the sci-fi visual realm, and we focused on some simple shapes. Circles, spheres, ellipses, toruses, parallel lines, and so on. And from developing this E99 energy system, which is the basis for the existence of the whole island, we wanted to extrapolate THAT system and make sure the player understood, visually, that they held that power system on their hand.

CW: In many cases... It's case by case. What does the player need to do with the asset that they're manipulating? Grossly, after much experimentation, we came down to the idea that the object could switch between a few critical eras. Then we experimented with... do we want to morph the object? Does the barrel sort of... MOOSH between these different states? Is it audibly and visually satisfying to have it crunch and pop into these different states?

The visual feedback, in combination with the design function, pointed us in the direction of going with a variety of states. Often we have three or five, and what that object looks like, and what it's going to do when it's in that certain state.

CW: We've had to make a lot of changes so that it's easier for the design and art sides to collaborate on working with eras. So that's meant a number of engine adaptations, where if we have an object that needs to transition between a number of eras, or a location, etc, we have a pretty healthy tool set that will allow us to do that.

I think, as most artists will tell you, the Unreal 3 Engine is a WONDER to work with. A very nice tool. 4

been assured that it will be possible

to play Singularity as a run-and-gun

experience, without focusing on the

puzzles unless you really want to,

but there are certainly going to be

was closer to your standard FPS

enough to suspend disbelief.

set-piece, where a train ride over an

enormous gorge was interrupted by a

towering, Godzilla-sized time monster.

Again, the tangible sense of peril was

blow TimeShift out of the water. 4

Raven didn't want to comment on a

have to use your head.

unavoidable plot points where you'll

The second stage we were shown



More Buzz fun available on PS2 and PSP.

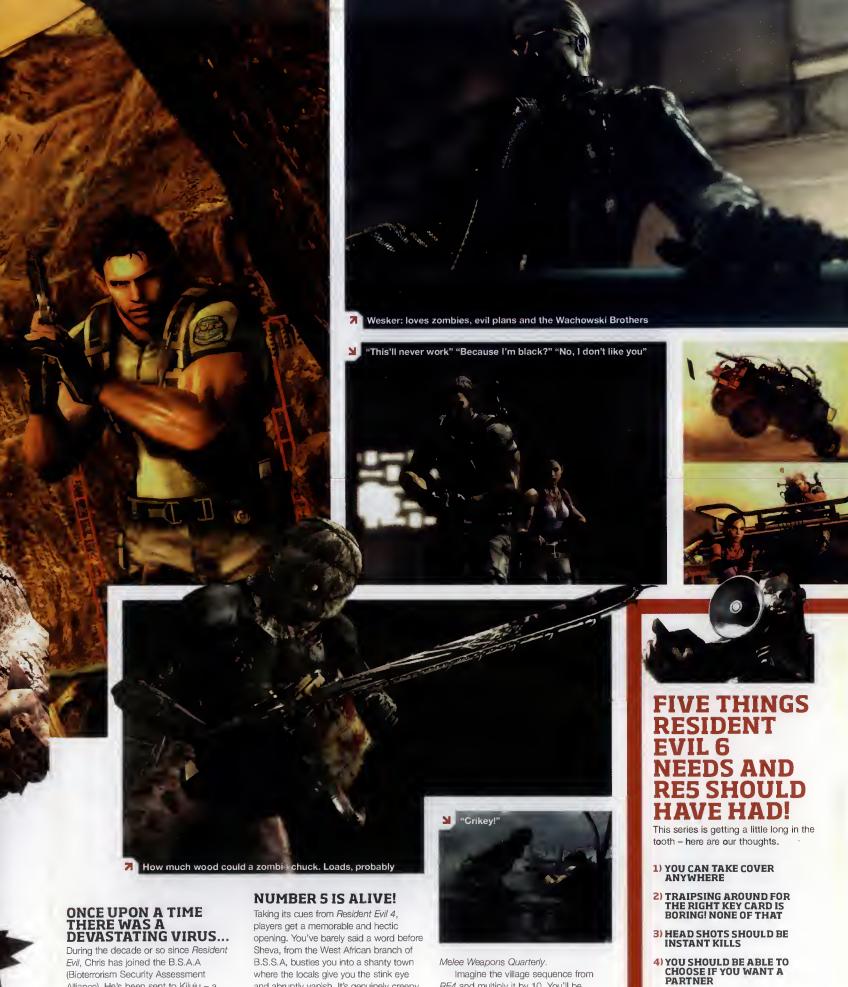
Buzz! buzzers required for play on PS3 / PS2.

Available March 26th

### REVIEW







Alliance). He's been sent to Kijuju - a fictional part of Africa - to investigate an "incident". What he finds stinks of the now "apparently defunct" Umbrella Corporation but the story is actually extremely compelling once you get into it, impressing even these jaded gorehounds. and abruptly vanish. It's genuinely creepy but minutes later - it's on, baby! Dozens of insane, infected locals attack - most with melee weapons (not to mention a huge executioner with an axe so massive it could be the Cover Axe for the latest issue of Impractical but Cool-Looking

RE4 and multiply it by 10. You'll be pushing bookcases to block windows, doors and the like. Soon, however, the infected break through. You can try to make a stand but it's quite likely you'll get cleft in twain.

So, in an almost sandboxy

- 5) IN THE NAME OF ALL THAT'S RED AND SLIMY, GET A DECENT INVENTORY SYSTEM!







Melee combat plays more of part in this game. A pity it's context-based and you can't just throw a punch. However if you shoot an infected bloke, he'll stagger and in that time, depending on where you shot him, you'll have the option of pressing 

to to deliver anything from a snap-kick to the face or a staggering uppercut. Saves ammo and feels good.



environment, you and Sheva sprint about, climb buildings, jump through windows, shoot explosive barrels and basically survive for as long as you can.

Placing such a hard, and broad, set piece so early on really sets the tone for *RE5*. We've had patchy luck with survival horror games lately. On one hand we have the excellent newcomer *Dead Space* — with its dark corridors, anti-gravity sections and space setting — it has proven a worthy addition to the roster. A good thing too, because the 'new' *Silent Hill* is veering towards the 'shit and dull' rather than 'tense and scary'. Yes, the monsters look

YOU'VE GOT TO USE YOUR MONSTERS WITH FINESSE, BABY!

it gets really old, really fast.

good, but if you just chuck on

them on screen, yelling, "Boo!" -

Not wanting to give the plot away, we'll have a quick talk about Sheva – your companion. She'll be with you for about 90% of the game so if you don't like computer-controlled friends, either play co-op online or split-screen at home. But here's the funny thing: Sheva is incredibly useful. She's not always running around getting into situations where you have to save her. In fact, if the face-gina (well what would you call it, then?) of some infected local is trying to choke you, press ② and Sheva will pull off some kicky-punchy

moves. She also heals you when you're looking sick and gives you ammo when you're looking a bit light in the bullet region and rubs your tummy when it hurts.

The last one was a lie. Sorry.

In essence she can be used as a pack mule – carrying all the weapons you can't (more on that in a second) – but don't misjudge her skills. If you're a bit crook, notch Sheva's state from 'cover' to 'attack' and chances are she'll kill a bunch of baddies for you. The downside to that is, if she dies, you die. Point we're making is Sheva has good and bad points. She kills a lot of the tension just by being there but it's a bloody genius way of making co-op part of the Resident Evil equation.

### WHY, EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER

### A MECHANIC IS A MECHANIC, DAMN IT!

One thing lacking in the Resident Evil series, once they included zombies that shoot back, was the ability to take cover and shoot from that position. This occurs frequently but trip off this: it only works on certain walls. The game decides what is cover and what isn't! If Resident Evil 6 gives you the ability to take cover anywhere and gets rid of the infantile puzzles in favour of the more epic ones, then we'd be talking.









### **HERE... WHAT GIVES?**

Okay, here's where we have to tell you why you're looking at a 9 in the score box and not the much-coveted 10. If you're going to upgrade a game - and Capcom has done so with a lot of it (no fixed camera, beautiful graphics, booming sound and some of the biggest and best monster fights in a game, well, ever) - why in the name of fairy bread and chocolate crackles would you not only make your inventory screen needlessly complicated, but unbelievably small and without the ability to make it bigger!?

Possibly to keep the co-op action tight, Capcom has opted for the inventory screen accessible in-game but the action doesn't pause. You can hotkey a weapon to each of the D-pad buttons but you simply can't carry enough. When you're sneaking through a village of crazed infected who sacrifice people to a giant albino crocodile you don't want to suddenly realise you can't pick up the ammo because there aren't enough slots in your inventory. Pressing @ will bring up Sheva's - and you can spend your time piss farting about (swapping, combining or simply discarding) - but that aforementioned crocodile cult? They don't care that the slot you need for ammo is taken up by a friggen flash grenade. They want to mutate into cool and imaginative beasts, you want to stomp on their heads until you're ankle deep in gore, damn it!

### **INVENTORY?** MORE LIKE, ERM. **OUTVENTORY! THAT** WAS TERRIBLE. SORRY

Between levels you can buy things that go into a magic holding... area, where you can store them for later and upgrading your weapons is pretty damn cool - but honestly it's such an old school hangover. Thankfully they've stopped the, "Do you want the climb the ladder? Yes/ No?" rubbish but you still have to partake in quite a few of those timed buttonpressing mini-games.

Sometimes they're actually a lot of fun - when you need to run, jump, duck and grab. Sometimes, unfortunately, they suck - when you need to pull a mind control device off someone's chest, a task that requires perfect positioning and hammering the 8 button until your controller begs you to stop.

#### YOUR CONTROLLER **TALKS TO YOU?**

Resident Evil 5 is a broad, exciting, survival horror/action game. Although the emphasis is more on the action, which is fine, ilt brings more of what we love about the series: weird, scary-looking monsters (just wait for the new Licker... that sounded bad, didn't it?), massive boss fights, a convoluted plot (although we could actually follow this one) and really, truly beautiful graphics.

Don't believe the trailers - you'll go from the desert land to underground cities, to modern army bases to battleships and so on. This is a big game too (15-30 hours depending on how much hidden stuff you'd like to find and the difficulty level you choose) and when you've finished it you'll unlock the Mercenaries Game, and a bunch of other cool stuff.

Capcom's obviously been staying up nights to make a great game, and honestly it's a piglet's curly doodle away from 10, but we can't reward an inventory system we've disliked since the first entry Still, overall it's a belter of game and well worth your time. & Anthony O'Connor



- · Just... so utterly beautiful!
- Loads of imaginative, beautifully designed
- monsters Sheva



We're still doing infantile puzzles and using a dicky inventory system?

VERDICT: Resident Evil 5 is a grand, bloody, epic adventure. Some scenes or sequences are so amazing you'll find yourself staring at the screen, drooling and mumbling: "Das Preedy Some of the archaic elements are present but are mostly forgivable



You've lost that lovin' feeling

he origin of the expression balls to the wall is far more benign than most people think. Despite what you may or may not assume, it really doesn't have anything to do with one's gentleman's area – it's a pilot thing. Specifically, at least back in the old days, throttle controls tended to have ball-shaped grips. Going balls to the wall involved pushing the controls fully-forward, against the dash or firewall – full throttle.

Balls to the wall.

The reason we mention this is because this idiom sums up *Tom Clancy's HAWX* rather nicely. It's loud, it's brash, it's fast, and it's filled with an above-average number of explosions. In fact, it's probably the most ostentatious Tom Clancy title yet. But it's not the best.

### **NEGATIVE GHOSTRIDER**

Keep reading though, because there's plenty to like about *HAWX*.

Things start innocuously enough you're soaring over Mexico City protecting the Ghost Recon squad on the ground from tanks and choppers until they can be extracted. You'll be introduced to the relatively simple controls, the targeting system and your wingman commands. While you start the game in the USAF, however, before long you're poached by a fledgling private military company to be their go-to guy of the sky - protecting their clients all over the world. HAWX's globetrotting missions are one of the things we appreciated most, as real-world locations are far easier to identify with. and a lot less alienating, than a bunch of

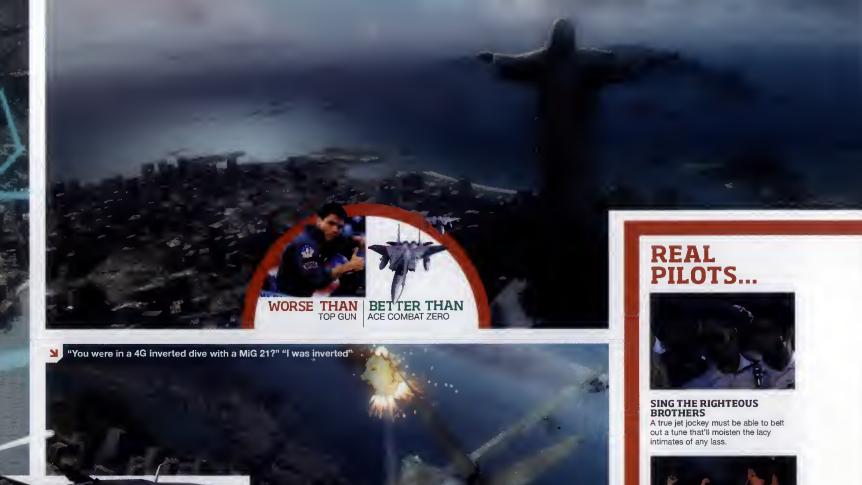
fantasy continents we couldn't give less of a shit about. Ace Combat, we're looking at you. The Rio De Janeiro mission probably remains our favourite, mostly because of the location itself; a picturesque seaside metropolis ringed by high mountains (and complete with Rio's giant Jesus watching benevolently over the aerial warfare).

The game feels good. Ubisoft Romania has been making flight games for some time now, and they've been perfectly functional. HAWX is no different. It's a very arcade-like flight experience, but there are controls that cater for beginners to experts. It's a simple game to pick up, and you'll be snapping around the sky painting targets with ease sooner rather than later. Ubisoft Romania didn't neglect to includea a cockpit view for purists either, and the

cabins of each iron eagle are bursting with detail. And knobs. And dials.

Holy shit, it's Viper!

HAWX's point of difference is its Enhanced Reality System, and it's kind of neat. The ERS, basically, keeps your plane in the sky, and helps you point it at the bad guys (or away from missiles). Activating the ERS when targeting a bandit will give you a series of blue rings on your HUD to negotiate that will allow you to successfully intercept. You don't need to use it, and it sometimes feels like you're being taken on a wild goose chase, but stick it out, because it really works. By the time you're through it you'll be in the perfect firing position. Similarly, if you've been fired upon, kicking the ERS in the guts again will give you an escape vector that'll lose any pesky heatseekers. You've



got flares that'll do the same thing, but only a couple. However, you can also fly in the imaginatively titled 'Off Mode'. With ERS off the camera will adjust to a cinematic perpective, and give you a bird's eye view of the battle. In Off Mode you can push your plane far beyond its aerodynamic limits to get the upper hand or lose a nearing missile. Airbrake and bank, or climb, hard and you'll throw your plane into impossible manoeuvres that'll shake even the willest opposition. The downside? Fail to light your 'burners quick enough after washing off that much speed and you'll stall. Do it too low and vou'il be a crater.

### THE PATTERN IS FULL

Thing is, there ARE one or two problems.

You won't really get involved with the story, because most of it comes from text mission briefings, which you'll probably stop reading. The percentage breakdown of anticipated target types is useful, and helps you choose the right plane and loadout for the gig (which will be suggested anyway) but it makes HAWX feel very businesslike, and lacking in character. Some proper cinematics might have helped. For instance, we've just realised we can't remember the main bloke's name. We could go and turn it back on, or trust Google - but our point's already been made. We're not asking for hours of emotional locker-room scenes, but HAWX really could've really been better in the presentation department.

You won't want to invert look in cockpit view either, because it's broken. It's a flight game, so Ubisoft Romania should've assumed it was dealing with a crowd who generally like pulling down on the stick to mean titling their virtual head back, thus looking up. In the game's admittedly snazzy cockpit view, inverting the look does this, but it also inverts sideto-side – which no regular Earthling does. Seriously, inverting side-to-side could only ever be necessary if you, or your television, are upside-down. At any rate, it's silly they're both linked, and you can't do one without affecting the other.

The replays (highlight reels at the end of your mission) are pointless because there's no sound, and the game doesn't look as good as the screenshots suggest. Also, unless you're absolutely God-awful at videogames, don't play it on easy – you'll ruin the game for yourself.

The biggest disappointment we had with HAWX, however, is that it's surprisingly sterile. We had kind of expected a more gritty, seat-of-yourpants, tree-grazing experience. It's really just a bit of a shooting gallery. HAWX is clever, drip-feeding you technological upgrades as the years go by (the game is set in 2021, but it doesn't start in 2021), but a few missions in (after unlocking expert controls and the ERS) and you really have seen most of what HAWX has to offer.

HAWX, as a result, is not quite the game we expected it to be. Don't necessarily take this as a warning to steer clear, because HAWX is more than fit for consumption. It's tight, accessible, and addictive. There's just about as much here for those who want quick-fire thrills as well as plane-boffins who'll be all a quiver at the thought of going balls to the wall with their Wild Weasel (infer from that what you will). Just be aware HAWX is an evolution of air combat rather than a revolution. Luke Reilly



### LOVE BEACH VOLLEYBALL (AND DOUBLE HIGH FIVES)

Only half your battles will be fought in the air. The other half will be fought on a the beach, against guys without shirts.



#### GO TO CLASS IN RAY-BANS

Nothing makes you look more brooding and cool than a pair of Ray-Bans. Wear them everywhere.





• Jets are rad
• Brilliant in co-op



A bit sterileLazy presentation

VERDICT: Solid, but not quite what we expected.





# 50 CENT: BLOOD ON THE SAND

Feel The Fiddy...

0 Cent is the biggest whore in the universe. There's nothing this selfmade man of the mean streets of Queens won't get stuck into - music's a given, but you can add books, movies (Righteous Kill with Al Pacino and Robert De Niro will be going straight to DVD in June if anyone's interested...), body spray, vitamin water (bought by Coca-Cola for around \$100 million USD), condoms, and, of course, games. 50 Cent: Bulletproof hit the PS2 and PSP in 2005 and was, to be blunt, a bit crap. While it's easy to hate on ol' Fiddy and his painful ability to stick around for eternity and make oodles of cash via consistently succesful business ventures strangely unrelated to his 'talent' for hip-hop, not everything Curtis Jackson plasters his ludicrous name on is of questionable quality. Case in point: the man's next-gen gaming debut. Surprise surprise, Blood on the Sand is really actually pretty good. We expected peanuts, and got the monkey instead - and the weird thing is, whether you like, love or loathe Fiddy's tunes, if vou dig a decent shoot 'em up, you're going to grudgingly come to embrace this brutally offensive foray into over-the-top

firefights with each passing bullet. You might even quietly acknowledge its keenly appropriated and refined cover system and rapid-fire gameplay at some point. But you'll make sure no-one hears you.

# 50 CENT AND THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL

"Motherf--ker!" is the first thing a visibly irate 50 Cent lisps during the utterly absurd opening sequence. It seems that, during a massive gig alongside G-Unit (Fiddy's posse of lesser rap-rats) in an undisclosed Middle Eastern country (probably Iraq), the booker ran out with Fiddy's \$10 million fee for services rendered. That's cool, things are swiftly settled with the offer of a jewel-encrusted skull instead. Problem is, after a manic dash through the streets to presumably return to Flddy's personal jet or something, gunfire gets the better of his ride and a miraculously hot chick in a clearly visible g-banger makes off with his uber-valuable skull. "Bitch got my skull!" yelps Fiddy, and the poo has meaningful intercourse with the fan from that point on. If you played Sega's frantic shooter The Club last year, you'll be treated to a similar

set-up here. You're constantly looking over Fiddy's shoulder as he runs, rolls, and lets rip a torrent of lead in the direction of his many Middle Eastern assailants. The crucial and most surprising difference lies in how tightly everything controls. Fiddy latches onto nearby cover instantly with the push of the 8 button, and if he isn't near anything that'll shield him from incoming death, he'll execute a dramatic forward roll. It's simple and it's been done before, but everything controls so well you'll be running and gunning like an elite killer in no time. In fact, Blood on the Sand works entirely by ripping off pre-established gameplay mechanics and making them as slick as possible. Another example is 'Gangsta' time, which is just bullet time with the perfect ratio of fast-moving Fiddy to slow-moving chumps. Get up close and personal and with a deft bash of O you'll hit up a few timed button presses that'll result in a gruesome finishing move should you get it right. Blood on the Sand is heroically ridiculous in its narrative approach and never once pretends to be attempting any gameplay innovations, and we appreciate that - because what it does do is shamelessly utilise every recently-





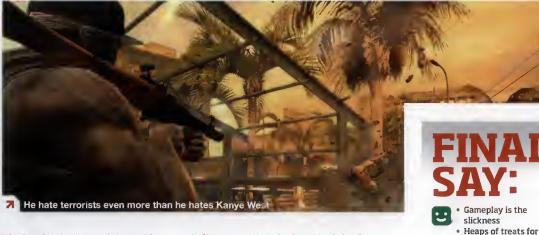


### **MO' MONEY**

Ironically, 50 Cent is rich as. Fancy US financial bible Forbes magazine placed Fiddy just behind rap mogul Jay-Z in terms of sheer wealth - he even met billionaire Patrice Motsepe to discuss production of 50 Cent brand platinum accessories. Pretty good for an ex-crack dealer who got shot nine times.







introduced tool within reach to provide an immediately fun pick up 'n play killing

### YOUR GUN GO OFF

Naturally, fans of the man are going to get the biggest bang for their buck out of this one. Everything from choosing a member of G-Unit to be your buddy (either Tony Yayo, Lloyd Banks, or DJ Whoo Kid, it doesn't seem to make much difference) to unlocking previously unreleased tracks by stringing together combos of consistent kill and generally behaving in a manner

befitting a gun-toting bad-arse is obvlously geared towards the consummate Fiddy fan. While it's hard to completely ignore this aspect of things if you're not into it (the constant stream of profanity-filled ghetto venacular grates, splashing your growing cash pile out on a bevy of weaponry, increasingly volatile finishing moves and spectacularly disrespectful taunts means casual players will have plenty to keep them going even after they're about ready to punch themselves in the face after hearing 'My Gun Go Off' for the umpteenth millionth time. 4 Toby McCasker

experience.

### **VERDICT:**

Fiddy fans

hitting 'mute'

Non-fans will end up

Not exactly original

So dumb it's dangerously





# Silent Hill: Homecoming





# SILENT HILL: HOMECOMING

It's made Pyramid Head angry

not Japanese. There's absolutely nothing wrong with that, of course, except that someone gave them the keys to come up with Silent Hill: Homecoming, the sixth instalment in Konami's iconically eery Silent Hill franchise and only the second titled not developed by Team Silent (drab recent PSP/PS2 outing Silent Hill: Origins was made by Climax Studios). Why is the lack of an authentic Asian recipe behind this dish worthy of note? Because the reason Silent Hill has struck such a chilling chord with its captive audience is because, unlike its chief rival Resident Evil, the series has never beaten its players over the head with bone-headed scares. Zombified canines leaping through the windows of a hitherto library-quiet hallway is far too crude a methodology of terror for Silent Hill, no - it'll be a giant, unexplained hole in the wall of your bathroom imploring you not to crawl through it (but you will) with the sound of what might be faint, disembodied children's voices... if only they weren't so twisted. Over the years. Silent Hill has presented its gnawing peril from the far more subtle, sinister, and inexplicably strange perspective of the Fast: Westerners simply don't understand how this peculiar mode of thinking works. Unfortunately for Homecoming, Double Helix has failed to grasp their forebears' oriental mentality (although not for lack

he developers at Double Helix are

of trying), littering Konami's latest with enough abrupt fear-mongering – cue things predictably jumping out of the dark, a la *Dead Space* – and action-orientated gameplay to spoil the familiar with the unwelcome.

#### FEARLESS FIGHTING MAN

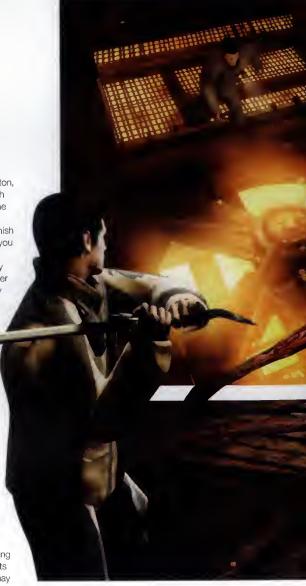
The first giveaway that things are going to be a little different for next-gen Silent Hill is the protagonist, Alex Shepherd. A recently discharged US military man, Alex enters the fray more than capable with firearms and in hand-to-hand combat. Granted, the plot is borderline textbook Silent Hill - Alex returns to his hometown of Shepherd's Glen to find the whole place swathed in ominous fog, his family changed and his brother Joshua missing - but it lacks the emotional weight and almost painful unravelling narrative of Harry's plight to save his adopted daughter in the first game, or especially James' devastating psychological torment in Silent Hill 2. You can see the twist coming from quite a ways off, and even though Alex is a believably messed-up guy, his knack for smiting monsters means that you're never quite as uneasy as you should be. In fact, it's the revamped (and admittedly, much better) combat system that paradoxically spoils the classic discomfort of past efforts in the series - you can now dodge enemy attacks with a tap of the **②** button, and come back immediately with a counter-attack that will stun the enemy, leaving them open for a decisive heavy attack that will finish them easily. Initially fiddly, once you get a handle on how to do this consistently, battling otherwordly beasties merely becomes another

obstacle and definitely not something to be feared. It's far more

enjoyable than the wonky combat system we've seen across all five previous games, and yet it means that the grand Silent Hill tradition of fleeing for your misbegotten life due to low health, lack of ammo or just plain frustration with the combat system is long gone. And we miss it.

#### DARK IN HERE

Despite its increasingly obvious lack of serious depth and drive, Homecoming is still very engaging in its own right. Were it not for its place as the sixth Silent Hill it may







### A HISTORY OF SILENT HILLS

1999 - Silent Hill [PSone]

2001 - Silent Hill 2 [PS2]

2003 - Silent Hill 3 [PS2]

2004 - Silent Hill 4: The Room [PS2]

2007 - Silent Hill: Origins [PSP/PS2]

2009 - Silent Hill: Homecoming [PS3]



even be considered a slightly above-average fright-fest, but as it stands it has much to live up to and, barring a brief cameo from a certain disturbed trucker in the introduction, there are few nods to the franchise's rich past. While iconic Silent Hill villain Pyramid Head barely features, some of the newer enemies are pleasingly gruesome and it's particularly satsifying to see large seeping wounds opening up on their filthy bodies as Alex hacks at them with his combat knife. One major component of the series that has returned is Akira Yamoaka's incredibly evocative scoring, with the man's canny knack for

deeply-felt eeriness making some scenes feel a little more unsettling than they really deserve to be. It may not be enough to entirely save the most generic yet of *Silent Hill*'s grisly offerings, but it's amazing how much some masterfully creaky BGM can affect things.

With that in mind, sure, you'll definitely develop some mildly sweaty palms as you stumble around in the dark sussing out exactly why Alex never appears in any of his family's portraits, but it's not going to resonate in the depths of your jilted subsconscious long after the final tattered curtain falls. 
Toby McCasker





- New combat system is fun
- Akira Yamoaka's score really rocks



- Lacks the cerebral chills we've come to expect
- Regularly predictable

### VERDICT:

Konami will want to get Team Silent back in for Silent Hill 7, we think.





# SEGA MEGA DRIVEULTIMATE COLLECTION WORSE THAN GETTING A SOLID, NEXT-GEN UPDATE IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

A ticket to the past

kay, consider us conflicted. It's 2009, right? We're playing, arguably, the most powerful home console available at this point in time. and was the reason we bought hi-def tellies. The potential of Blu-ray promised us games with astonishing visual and aural detail, with enough storage space to show off unimagined environments and characters; in short, would give an experience to eclipse everything before it. Then why are we perfecting our Green Hills speed run while Killzone 2 gathers dust? How come we rush to play Streets Of Rage 3, a game that's nearly half our average age, over LBP?

Flicking through the impressive roster of 40-odd games in this compilation is like finding a forgotten box of toys from your childhood, sparking memories and a gush of excitement. Hey, look, Sonic & Knuckles! Oh man, Story Of Thor, we totally forgot

about that! But, like that forgotten toy box stashed at the back of the cupboard, there are a couple of favourites missing - where's Toe Jam & Earl? What about OutRun? They should be here - and they haven't changed; age hasn't improved them. The graphics are the same now as they were a decade-and-a-half ago, though Sega has tried to smooth things out with an option that makes the lagged edges a touch less offensive. This works in some games, like Story Of Thor that gains a beautiful comic-book effect, but in others - like any Sonic game - the characters and backgrounds look like they're made from plasticine, and in turn lose some detail.

Also, the transition from the CRTfriendly ratio of 4:3 to hi-def 16:9 means a good chunk of your screen is going to waste, but if you don't mind things looking squat and fat you can stretch it out. The theme music that sounded sweet in

your teens is pretty horrible now, but it's amazing how much emotion is packed into the limited range afforded at the time.

Really, this whole package is built for gamers who have played the majority of these classics before and want to relive their memories - and that's fine. Cheekily, however, most of the titles that you'll find here were on another release from a couple of years ago, the plain vanilla Sega Mega Drive Collection. Squeezing the word 'ultimate' in adds the excellent Streets Of Rage trilogy and three of the Shining Force series, whilst taking out the abominable Virtua Fighter 2 and some other dross. Sadly, Altered Beast remains.

In the end, this compilation doesn't do enough. It re-packages so much from the previous release that you need to question the value. Will laying down 70 hard earned really justify having seven Sonic games at your fingertips? Unlikely. 📣 Paul Taylor





You can't argue at \$1.43 per game

 Interviews with developers No 32X or Mega

CD games Recycles a lot from the

earlier compllation

### **VERDICT:**

A lacking update from the 2007 collection. Not sure it's needed





Lead: He ate some

Eat Lead: The Return of Matt Hazard



### "SOMEBODY PUSHES ME, I PUSH BACK"

The sinister Wallace Wellesley will periodically hack the game, twisting the level design on the fly, and warping in new enemies to torment Matt Hazard. With digitized distortion FX telegraphing each incoming hack, it makes the game look like something out of *Tron*.



# EAT LEAD: THE RETURN OF MATT HAZARD

It's like 9/11, times 100!

ew IPs are as scarce as Willy Wonka's golden tickets, and genuinely funny games are as rare as hens' teeth. To get both at once would be like finding the Eye of Thundera in your Corn Flakes. It just doesn't happen.

It certainly hasn't happened here. The premise is brilliant: a washed-up video game character from the '80s is brought out of retirement for one last shot at super-stardom. Matt Hazard never existed, of course — his entire 8-bit back-story is a fabrication, a satire of the collective squandered youth of gamers worldwide.

Only the whole game is a trap. Neil Patrick Harris (Doogie Howser, Starship Troopers) voices a warped games company CEO out to torture Matt; to get revenge for never being able to beat the game when he was a kid. Thus Doogie is constantly hacking the game, copying and pasting every villain Matt has ever faced into a

Kafka-esque, Tron-like nightmare world.

It's certainly amusing to see the pixilated, wafer-thin fascists from Matt Hazard 3D join forces with more contemporary game villains; it's a mad mash-up of genres and styles.

Matt Hazard himself, voiced by Will Arnett (Arrested Development, 30 Rock) has plenty of self-aware dialogue to contribute. Neglect to pop in a fresh clip, and he might remark: "That's right. Just keep pulling the trigger. Maybe it'll magically reload."

Or when he spies the repetitive booty-shaking animations on the obligatory nightclub level, he'll quip: "Even I can dance better than that." Eat Lead breaks down the 'fourth wall' — everyone is in on the joke.

So yes, it's a top concept. You can see what they were aiming for: the ultimate Duke Nukem parody. But unlike Monkey Island, or Portal, where the humour is married to the gameplay, here it is but a sideshow. This is a conventional third-person action game at heart, an Operation Winback-style romp through warehouses overflowing with mindless goons and destructible crates.

Awkward level design makes hunting out all those villains a chore. And even on easy, it's tough – dying and reloading from checkpoints makes up the bulk of the game. That's all arguably part of the postmodern retro experience they're trying to create here, but it doesn't make it any less frustrating.

Don't get us wrong – it's not unplayable rubbish. It has many flaws, yet Matt Hazard is the kind of mindless shooter you can get lost in, in spite of yourself. Good for exactly one playthrough, it's the quintessential rental title.

• James Cottee

# FINAL SAY:



 Decent third-person action, novel cover system



The occasional giggle
 Die-and-restart

gameplay gets real old, real fast • Not as funny as it

thinks it is

### VERDICT:

After a weekend with Hazard, you may want to return him.







Join the Killzone Community at Killzone.com







# AFRO SAMURAI

Ninja! The tea party's over!

ocus. You can't get anything done without it. If you think you can study for that big test while listening to JJJ, with three chat windows open and a game of Desktop Tower Defense running in the background, while simultaneously doing curls with 10-kilo weights and working at your phone sex job, then frankly, you're dreaming.

Focus is important in Afro Samurai, too. Holding down @ sends the screen monochrome, slows down time, and lets the eponymous hero pull off his more spectacular moves. Focus can make the difference between hitting a guy 30 times to kill him, or merely 10. And when a game throws as many generic enemies at you as Afro Samurai does, you need every edge you can get.

Let us be clear: Afro Samurai is repetitive. Grindingly so. Each area demands you kill a large number of enemies, and as you stumble over the learning curve, most areas will require multiple attempts to beat.

Crowd control is crucial to success. The large, spacious combat zones provided will give you plenty of opportunity to dash off to an uninhabited corner, so – for a few seconds, at least – you can face one or two enemies instead of 10.

You can see what they were striving for with the interface: a minimalist, super-Spartan samural aesthetic. There is no on-screen furniture. No statistics to tell you how close you are to dying, or how close your enemies are to dying, or how much

Focus power you have left, or which way it is to the exit, let alone what any button may do at any given moment.

A few blood splotches on the screen will let you know you've been damaged. Desaturated colours and a rapid, audible heartbeat will let you know you're close to death, and yet another restart from a faroff checkpoint.

The art direction dovetalls perfectly with the soundtrack by rap group RZA. Stolc, unflappable, the Afro Samural stands rigidly as each new wave appears. Stylish split screens show them running into position on all sides, like something out of *Kill Bill*, or the innumerable '70s action films plagiarised by Tarantino. This feature also kicks in when enemy reinforcements arrive. If you happen to be in the middle of something, like fighting 10 dudes in an area the size of a phone booth, the contraction of the playable screen area at these moments can be an unwelcome distraction.

Even the loading screens strive to build this grim atmosphere. Some are views through the eyes of a dazed, wounded Afro as he's tended to by Okiku, Kelly Hu's love interest character. Others are warped memories of Afro's long dead father, disintegrating into crows and laughter. They flash open as his irritating sidekick, Ninja Ninja, shouts his name. Then it's back to the checkpoint for another spanking.

In some respects, they took the minimalism way too far. For instance, you can't access the option screen from



the in-game menu. Since the default settings are for a standard Y-axis, and an INVERTED X-axis, that guarantees at least one exit to the main menu.

Seriously: who in the world inverts the X-axis? Who?! If you're one of them, then please do write in to the letters section. We're dying to know WHY.

You can't adjust the brightness in-game, either. No, it shows some graded bars, and suggests you adjust the brightness on your TELEVISION so you can see them all. Considering how many browns, greys, and blacks there are on the palette, some tweaking here is a must, too.

Again, we can see what they were aiming for. The minimalist, brush-like rendering looks great in the cut scenes. Not as good as *Okami*, but still gorgeous. But when you've got a top-down view of a dozen men in silly hats, all scampering over soiled tatami mats, that artistry just doesn't shine through.

Those stylish minion intros don't seem nearly as flash the sixth time you see them, either — and since cut scenes cannot be skipped, you'll be seeing them quite a bit.





### **ALL-STAR CAST**

The bedazzler-studded cast of the original anime returns, with Kelly Hu, Ron Perlman, and Samuel L. Jackson as both the Afro Samurai, and his irritating alternate personality/sidekick Ninja Ninja. Together these thespians bring a touch of class to this middling exercise.





The puzzles are pedestrian, yet buggy. The very first one has a glitch that may force you to quit out and try again. It's your classic pull-a-lever-that-opens-a-gate-just-long-enough-for-you-to-run-through situation. Yet while the gate soon returns to its starting position, the lever does not. As for the franchise's

notorious adult content, this aspect comes across more as dirty than cheeky or risqué. The swearing, for one thing, isn't particularly funny. And stumbling into a warlord's private burlesque show chamber, only to be confronted by four sword-wielding whores wearing nothing but their underpants isn't half as sexy as it sounds. Within seconds they prove to be just more interchangeable goons — though, admittedly, they grunt and shriek at a higher pitch.

While there's no denying they've nailed a certain morbid, arty aesthetic, the core of the game is mindless brawling action.

So: 10 out of 10 for style. We just wish Namco Bandai had focused more on the substance. 

James Cottee





- Arty presentation, stylish direction
- Top voice talent, and music by RZA



- Combat is repetitive, frustrating, and shallow
- Oft-murky visuals

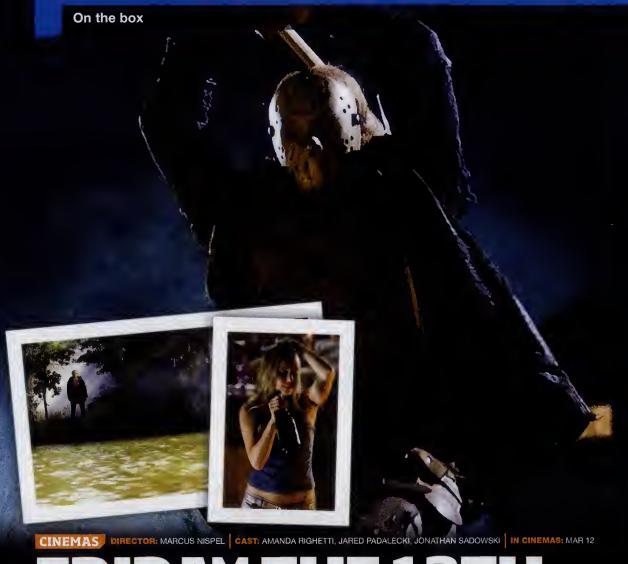
### **VERDICT:**

Does the job, but will disappoint even fans of the anime.





# TERMISSION



FRIDAY THE 13TH (R18+)

ike many fellow gorehounds, we were horrifled at the announcement that *Friday the 13th* was getting the remake/redux/re-imagining treatment.

Then the two words that almost guarantee empty seats, where our burns would have been, appeared: "Michael Bay".

Yes, Mr. Helicopter-shot-with-175-edits-per-minute (possibly) taking on Jason Voorhees. He's already buggered the Transformers franchise (and no, we don't all agree "...but the robots looked cool..." is an excuse for that cinematic bag of arse) and although he didn't direct the dire *The Texas* 

Chainsaw Massacre remake his sweaty little paws were all over it in a producing capacity, as with Friday.

That said, watch the *Friday* series again. A lot of them are extremely... shit.

The first four are tidy but then the plots get sillier, until we have Jason in space.

The point of all this is that an extremely gory, nudity-filled *Friday the 13th* that takes us back to the basics of directionally-challenged teens vs. a hulking, deformed redneck at Camp Crystal Lake might not be such a bad thing.

We can hope.



### ALSO IN CINEMAS...

### Watchmen (MA15+)

Director: Zack Snyder Cast: Malin Akerman, Billy Crudup

Alan Moore's groundbreaking graphic novel finally gets the cinematic treatment. Zack Snyder – director of the *Dawn* of the Dead remake and 300 – will pretty much make or break his career on this hot potato. Set in an alternate 1985 America in which costumed superheroes are part of the fabric of everyday society.

# Confessions of a Shopaholic (PG)

Director: P.J. Hogan Cast: Isla Fisher, John Goodman, Joan Cusack

Based on a series of books, this chick flick will no doubt explore the woman/shoes equation. Seriously, they're just shoes! P.J. Hogan directs, making this quite the Aussiecentric flick.

### Duplicity (MA15+)

Director: Patrick
Tatopoulos
Cast: Michael Sheen
and Rhona Mitra

There's not a lot we know about this flick other than the fact it's a spy thriller. Expect lots of people walking quickly and glaring at other folks. That's spy training, that is.



You can see some bitching and moaning about Michael Bay on this very page. Will this man remake every-bloody-thing? Well

that's not set in stone. Y'see our American

friends flocked to the new Friday The 13th making it the number one movie on opening day... and then the box office dropped by a record 81%. Genre films live or die on word of mouth so perhaps word wasn't good.

That said, it seems that the remake of A Nightmare on Elm St. is still going ahead, thus proving there is no God. There's even a rumour Lindsay Lohan will be in it. What, as Freddy?





# PALE RIDER

Director: Clint Eastwood
Cast: Clint Eastwood, Michael
Moriarty, Carrie Snodgress,
Christopher Penn

Clint Eastwood returns to the saddle after nine years. After corporate mining boss Coy LaHood begins a campaign of terror to drive out independent pan miners, a nameless stranger called Preacher rides into town and sets things straight.

### **EXTRAS: 5**

### VERDICT:

Classic Eastwood Western action. Great stuffl





### ERASER (MA15+)

Director: Chuck Russell
Cast: Arnold Schwarzenegger, James
Caan, Vanessa Williams, James
Cohum

John Kruger is a U.S. Marshal who "erases" the lives and identities of people entering the Witness Protection Program. Kruger must protect a sexy executive who's uncovered a deal to put a new superweapon in the wrong hands.

### **EXTRAS: 6**

### VERDICT:

Not his best work. Just watch *True Li*es





### EVERY WHICH WAY BUT LOOSE

**Director:** James Fargo **Cast:** Clint Eastwood, Sondra Locke,
Geoffrey Lewis, Beverly D'Angelo

Eastwood plays trucker Philo Beddoe, a revered brawler who lives in a shack with his mother and a beer-drinking orangutan.

### **EXTRAS: 5**

### VERDICT:

Fun to watch, but it's all a bit silly





# TERMISSION

On the box...

DVD CREATORS: BRAD WRIGHT, JONATHAN GLASSNER CAST: RICHARD DEAN ANDERSON, AMANDA TAPPING, CHRISTOPHER JUDGE, DON S. DAVIS

# STARGATE SG-1: THE PORTAL COLLECTION (M)



Stargate SG-1 has a cult following most TV shows can only dream of. It's certainly not the only one, but who would've guessed this film-to-TV spinoff would've resonated so well amongst sci-fi TV viewers?

Stargate SG-1 follows the present-day adventures of SG-1, a military team from Earth that, along with two dozen other SG teams, ventures to distant planets through an alien device known as a Stargate which is housed in a top-secret U.S. military base known as the Stargate Command (SGC) underneath Cheyenne Mountain.

Stargate SG-1: The Portal Collection is a mammoth 61-disc collection that contains all 10 seasons of Stargate SG-1 plus the films The

Ark of Truth and Continuum! It's an absolute truckload of star-spanning adventure in the one deluxe box set!

Perhaps the biggest problem with this set is the timing. The only people who'll really be keen to shell out the dollars for this haul are hardcore Stargate SG-1 fans - and we'd be surprised if the bulk of them hadn't already been picking up the series boxouts as they were being released. Still, if there are any fans who are yet to purchase, why are you waiting?

EXTRAS: 5

#### VERDICT:

Expensive, but a fantastic package nonetheless





# BABYLON A.D. (M)

Director: Mathieu Kassovitz Cast: Vin Diesel, Michelle Yeoh, Mélanie Thierry, Gérard Depardieu

A few decades in the future, a mercenary named Toorop accepts a contract to bring a young woman only known as Aurora to New York. She is host to an organism that a cult wants to harvest in order to produce a genetically modified Messiah.

### **EXTRAS: 5**

### **VERDICT:**

This was universally panned. We can see why



### **MAX PAYNE**

### (MA15+)

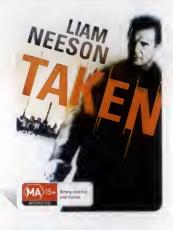
Director: John Moore Cast: Mark Wahlberg, Mila Kunis, Beau Bridges, Chris 'Ludacris' Bridges, Chris O'Donnell

Max Payne tells the story of a maverick cop determined to track down those responsible for the brutal murder of his family and partner. Unfortunately, it diverts so far from the game it's all a little pointless.

### EXTRAS: 6

### **VERDICT:**

More violence and sex but still not great



### TAKEN (MA15+)

Director: Pierre Morel Cast: Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace, Famke Janssen

Retired and divorced CIA operative Bryan Mills is on the phone to his 17-year-old daugher, who's on holiday in Paris, when she is kidnapped. Drawing on his extensive skills he immediately sets about tracking down his baby girl and killing absolutely everyone who gets in his way. Mills is Bourne crossed with Jack Bauer.

### **EXTRAS: 6**

### **VERDICT:**

Violent and righteous, a real man's movie



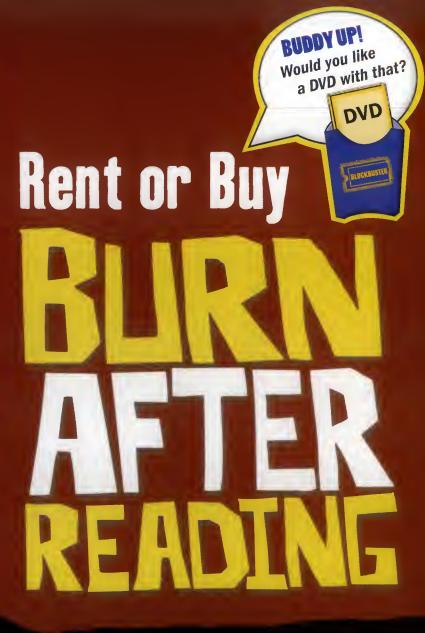
### LIKE THIS TRY...

MacGyver

The original Richard Dean Anderson TV action series!



\$29.80\*



and Own either



\*Terms and conditions apply. At participating stores only, for a limited time & while stocks last. O Brother, Where Art Thou? and The Big Lebowski can both be purchased outside the Buddy Up! Offer for \$9.95 RRP ea. 'RRP' refers to recommended retail price. 'SSP' refers to suggested sale price.



for only \$7.95\*

# TERNET

Gaming, trailers, downloads, friends...

# **LATEST**

Download this..

### Super SF II Turbo HD Remix



A supremely balanced version of the old school classic, complete with all new hand drawn character models. Incredible.

### Killzone 2 demo



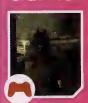
If you still haven't been convinced by this technical behemoth, then maybe it's time to check out the demo. Do it now!

### Flower trailer



An insightful look behind the scenes at the PSN's latest masterpiece – a great companion piece to the game itself.

### Resistance: Retribution demo



A free demo of the upcoming Resistance title for the PSP. A must download for all those hankering for this new gem.

### Naruto Ultimate Ninja DLC



This game is being remarkably well supported with free DLC. It won't blow your mind, but it's still worth getting.

# PLAYSTATION Network

### **ONLINE REVIEWS**



# **FLOWER**

In Bloom

Like the proverbial pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, the games industry has always chased the myth of the cinematic experience – the chance for gamers to replicate what they see and feel on the silver screen in a humble vīdeo game, with the player steering the car, firing the gun, wielding the sword, rescuing the princess.

But it's only now, as the games industry has finally developed the clout to compete Hollywood in terms of production values, that the opposing pulls of narrative and interactivity have become immediately apparent. What Flower does so majestically is solve this problem in a single swoop by creating a narrative experience that could only work in a videogame setting. Instead of



tearing the fabric of gaming itself, by shoehorning story where it doesn't belong, *Flower* works with its medium as opposed to pushing against it.

The result is a flawless, moving experience that is practically unmatched in gaming. In many ways it's the game of the year – a short, perfectly functioning piece of art that practically causes the controller melt into your hand until it almost ceases to exist.

### VERDICT:

Absolutely seamless. Do not miss out on this, seriously.

10



### **NOBY NOBY BOY**

What the?

Look – we don't know what Noby Noby Boy is about, all right? Explaining is the definitive exercise in futility. Whatever it is, it's barely a game by normal standards. There's no real target, no goal, nothing to achieve, no guarantee other than the inevitable fact that playing this game will leave you utterly, utterly confused.

But bizarrely that's not necessarily a bad thing. Coming from the creator of We Love Katamari, Noby Noby Boy essentially provides you with a playground and gives you a big ball of plasticine to play with.

The 'plasticine' in question is the main character, BOY. BOY is controllable via both analogue sticks – the front end with the left analogue stick, the arse end with the right. This means that you can quite literally stretch BOY to the end of the known universe and beyond.

You can tie yourself in a crazy knot, eat people, grow, stretch, contract, the possibilities are... well, not endless – but pretty damn broad nonetheless.

Ye olde cliché of you'll either love it or hate has never been more applicable. Noby Noby Boy is an acquired taste, but you may just fall in unconditional love with this groundbreaking effort. It's more like a toy than a videogame, but it's so bloody cheap that it's impossible to not recommend it.

Give it a bash - you will/won't regret it.

### VERDICT:

We still don't know what to think about this batshit insane title is about.

7



The world is a milkbar

e ranted, raved, coughed, and scrawled our praises for Street Fighter IV last month but as usual, only got to speculate on the rampant awesomeness the online play might offer. Since then the game has been taken online and spanked around like a communal smut magazine. The prognosis is good. Despite the doubts of naysayers who thought tighting games could never be tight and playable online, Street Fighter IV is just that. And a whole lot more.

But how? How could a game that measures strikes, blocks, and parries to the millisecond be a tenable riot across a network larger than a shoelace? It appears to be the result of some sort of Da Vinci-like genius. While it's certainly not perfect, the majority of our battles through our direct line cable modem had the speed of a couch competition.

Part of the success revolves around only accepting challenges where the connection between both players is close to perfect (easily grasped thanks to a simple connection icon). Saying that, we managed to have lagfree brawls with only two red connection bars.

Apart from great net code, the other big drawcard for Street Fighter IV is the ability to dodge the multiplayer lobbles and turn on Arcade Interrupt. As mentioned in our previous review, this allows players to fight through the Arcade mode while waiting for an online transient to sniff them down for a challenge. It's the sort of boon Mr T. would beat out of Santa.

But Arcade Interrupt has its drawbacks. The worst is the inability to filter out undesirable challenges from specific players or gamers ploughing away over in, say, Serbia. Many times we'd be pulled out of a round to find the spud that interrupted us had the connection speed of a modem running on a mouse wheel. No thanks. It also has a tendency pair up players who've rejected each other moments earlier. We have no idea why there isn't a filter of some description.

Connectivity aside, the online play lacks interesting FIFA-like options. It features Ranked and Player matches and lobbies, but no Tournament or Group Survival modes. Perhaps these will feature in upcoming DLC, but they should've made it into the original cut.

So yes, Street Fighter IV may be a bit thin on modes and a bit simple when it comes to its connection options. But the network coding is the best in the genre. Combined with its Arcade Interrupt teature, Capcom's latest is the best online fighter in existence.

Fact. - James Ellis













- Smoother than a vanilla beach bottom
- Arcade Interrupt works!



...most of the time. Lacking online modes

**VERDICT:** Sick of playing Street Fighter on your own



### **WE WANTS IT!**

The PSN continues to surprise the crap out of us with the sustained amount of quality released on the format. Here a couple more to watch out tor in the tuture.



This multiplayer RTS-ish title has been causing a bit of a shitstorm as the name suggests, it actually features a 'fat princess'. This could be the next PSN phenomenon.



# Pixel Junk

It's no secret that we go spazmo for anything trom Q Games, so we're anticipating whatever it is these guys happen to have up their sleeves - or possibly just some more Pixel Junk Monsters DLC.



# Bomberman

Bomberman Is one of the greatest multiplayer games in history, and is perfectly suited to the PSN. Hopefully this title won't stray too far from the awesome, balanced dynamics of the original.



Pessie
This game will rule your life. A major

part of the compulsive Pop Cap games collection, Peggle has been ruining lives on the PC since torever. Killzone 2

### REVIEW





GENRE: SHOOTER
RELEASE: NOW
DISTRIBUTOR: SONY
DEVELOPER: GUERRILLA GAMES
PLAYERS: 1-32
PLOYER: 510,905

# KILLZONE 2 MULTIPLAYER REVIEW

"Um... I pick the bloke with the big gun for my team!"

ast issue we stamped a big '10' on *Killzone 2* for the single player campaign. Now we're going to talk about Warzone – the *Killzone 2* multiplayer component.

The biggest surprise with Warzone is – along with the expected ultraviolence, shooty-shooty, explodey-stuff – sits an extremely deep and tactical game.

It's as profound and immersive as the game proper, whereas most multiplayer modes of late have been shallow and repetitive, not to mention generic.

To be honest, we were expecting a small handful of options – a Capture the Flag style game, Team Deathmatch and Catch and Kiss.

But there'll be no Helghast pashing in this multiplayer.

See, Warzone is class-based, effectively giving you the chance to choose a class of character that plays to your strengths and will assist your side during battle.

### PICK A SIDE, ANY SIDE...

So, will you be the self righteous ISA or the sneaky Helghast? It's actually a tough call because the Helghast are an iconic enemy and loads of fun to shoot – looking all scary and glowy-eyed – but they're also a heaping helping of cool to play as.

You get a choice of seven classes initially, and you can mix two of them – again playing to your skills. As you go along you'll unlock abilities, weapons and various other destructive, sneaky or mechanical powers.

# SO HOW CLASSY ARE THESE CLASSES? HUH? WORDS NOW!

We have Rifleman class: he's your standard soldier. In fact he's the default soldier. No special powers as such but he can use pretty much every single weapon in the game. This is good class to start with, although expect to get killed a lot.

Medic class: taking a cue from

the excellent *Team Fortress 2* and *Resistance 2*, this fellow has a special healing gun, which revives dying team mates. This extremely self sacrificing class can also drop health kits. This is one of the less 'fun' classes but if you want to form a group and cause some damage you will always need a medic. Otherwise no one can shout out, "MEDIC!". And then where would we be?

Engineer class: this gadget-happychappy can deploy automated turrets (nice!) and can repair ammo dispensers and gun turrets found around the maps.

Scout class – a personal favourite – has a sniper rifle and a cloaking device. When a Scout stays still they're invisible, but they become more visible while moving. You can also tag the locations of the enemy and send the info to your team mates.

Assault class – is for people who get bored reading fortune cookies. They come with a grenade launcher, armour that slows them down but a

speed boost to make them go the bolt when they need to. After they've dropped a brace of grenades near some enemies, say.

Saboteur class – this is really kooky. When they respawn they have the appearance of their enemies. If the opposing team are sufficiently distracted, or a bit crap, the sneaky Saboteur can fill the enemies' "safe" base with mines. As soon as they retreat it's a nasty, explosive surprise.

Tactician class – these guys can create a respawn point by deploying a smoke grenade (trust us, essential stuff!) and they can call a flying sentry drone for air support.

### BY CRIKEY, THAT'S CLASSIER THAN ONE OF THOSE TUXEDO T-SHIRTS!

Indeed. And who thought we'd ever be living in a world where something classier than that would exist!? Warzone plays out with "dynamic

### HEY, WANNA BE IN MY CLAN?

So, you're a hu-man. You own Killzone 2, you can get online – there's no reason you shouldn't be forming groups or clans (unless you want to beat the single player campaign first). Beware of invites from people you don't know. Check their stats. They could be headhunting good players and they might suck. Just a little advice.



matches", this just means you have multiple game types in each round. It works out really well because different goals including Assassination, Search and Retrieve, Search and Destroy, Bodycount and Capture and Hold will send you all over some of the (massive) maps and you'll get to learn the lay of

the land much more quickly.

This may change by the time you're reading this, but at the moment 32 players can get online, forming squads of four. These squads can group into teams of eight.

Killzone 2 also offers a clan system where 64 people can play online for Valour Points, We're not quite sure what the hell that is but it sounds fun. Plus 64

players!? Madness!

### WRAP IT UP, MONKEY BOY!

With eight varied maps that come with the game plus the promise of downloadable content in the near future, Warzone is just as polished and enticing as *Killzone 2*. If only they were in the same box.

[long pause]

Hang on, they are! In fact, both the single player campaign and multiplayer modes are so finely honed, so well presented – you'd senously have to be a mad bastard not to be impressed. Bring back the '10' stamp! - Anthony O'Connor

# FINAL SAY:



- Nuanced, tactical combat...
- ... mixed with awesome explosions and run-and-gun



- Some of the classes are a bit hard to master
- It doesn't massage your feet. What do you want here?

#### **VERDICT:**

little surprise

Killzone Z is as good a multiplayer game as Killzone Zs single player campaign. Slick, fast moving combat with



TONES
WALLPAPERS
AND MORE

in our mobile club

To download any of our Wallpapers, tones, & vids txt the...

**ITEMCODE** to 19 40 30 eg.PA59243

Wicked Tones, Wallpapers and More!! Join the Mobile Mayhem Club for just \$4/week One off sign up fee \$4. (All items require a WAP enabled handset)

Mobile Java Games Join the Mobile Mayhem Games Club for \$8/week.



PAT/627

PA77627 PA77640 PA77603 PA77099 PA77645
Fat StarWars kid Crazy Ounce Bear attack Nut Cracker Layin The Smackdown

PA77268 - NAUGHTY NURSE
PA75890 - CARMEN ELECTRA
PA75864 - HANDFUL
PA77550 - SHY BABE CORRUPTED
PA75931 - SOPHIE HOWARD
PA79269 - HOT POLICE BABE
PA79116 - BEDROOM ANTICS
PA76233 - SEXY BEACH BABE
PA75965 - BAD COP
PA79442 - SCHOOLGIRL
PA77521 - MISS UK STRIP
PA80443 - 3 MIN STRIP





Mobile Mayhem is a subscription club offering pics, tops animations a more for just \$4 per week until you send \$1 to 1940.00 Mobile Mayhem Java Games cost \$8 per week \$4 stip up fee applies to new members. Play On I on is a non subscription service. Topes are not recorded by the original artist and por representation is made to this effe Normal operator SMS & provising charges apply. You mue to 16+ to use this service. We may contact you with a coesional promotion however you may opt-out at anyling by following the opt-out instructions on promotion. Mod Mayhem is a brand of AMV Group PO Box 2952 Lond WC1N 3XX. For customer support call 1300 857 633 or email help blingmob comh, reed 4t is a non subscription service. Nor operator browsing charges apply, 16+ Only. First litems fre themsaling pic pack download.

Empatibility between herefared may very and some librar swill not be evaluable for certain models. Please enail (support enail) to check if you hunded a compatibility. Please check compatibility before you order. PANSFORHERS, THASEFORHERS, the loop and all evaluable are trademarks of Hasbor and as the used who permission. 2 2007 Hasbor, Int. Rights, Reserved. 3 2007 Hasbor and a second process of the process

# SIGHT

Tips and cheats

# TOP 10 THINGS TO DO IN SKATE 2

We've spent a hell of a long time shredding New San Vanelona, and we've come up with 10 things you must try in this super sequel!



### 1 DROP OFF THE DAM

This one is our favourite – we've spent hours and hours doing this in the office, and it's the main reason we just can't stop playing  $Skate\ 2$ . The sheer scale of this drop is awesome, as your skater is dwarfed by the concrete colossus. Plus, the speed you get will weld your arse cheeks together. They don't call it the Murderhorn for nothing. Try klcking it off with a wall ride for extra flair.



### 2 TRANSITION FROM THE FUN PARK TO THE MEGA PARK

You need to buy the Fun Park first, but it's so worth it. Easily superior to the Monster Skatepark, and a quarter of the cost. If you really want to show off, however, you need to make the final transition from the last quarter pipe to the final bowl of the Mega Park. It's not easy, and you'll need a bit of speed – but it's oh-so-satisfying.

### 3 AXE YOURSELF ON THE STEEL FENCE BELOW G.E.D. HIGH

This one is great for giggles – we spent far more time than we probably ought to have trying to impale our poor skater on the spiky fence, or at least drape him over it, bent and broken. We never managed, but we got some great skull crushing impacts (complete with a meaty metallic thunk).



### 4 HIPPY JUMP A CAR

Good luck. We're still trying. Speed is the key, obviously, but you also need to ensure you jump at exactly the right time. Too soon and you won't clear the car and more than likely bail. Too late, and you'll get taken out at the shins and be formally introduced to the windscreen.





### 5 GET STIFF-ARMED BY A PEDESTRIAN

This one happened completely by accident. We were skating a little too close to a burn who promptly stuck his arm out and clotheslined us. We've seen footage on skate.reel of a skater getting punched in the wedding vegetables by an irate local, but it hasn't happened to us yet.



### 7 DROP OFF THE E

Another must. You need to access it via the storm drain that runs down from the dam – there's a staircase that runs up behind the New San Vanelona sign perched on the mountain. From there, set a marker and go nuts. It's easily one of the top three drops in the game. Huge – just huge.



### **8 CORKSCREW A DRAIN PIPE**

Most easily achieved after launching off the Murderhorn and carrying an insane amount of speed into one of the pipes. You don't need to grab the board; your inertia will keep you on it. Lots of fun. We haven't succeeded in doing it in the coffin position though. Or the reverse coffin, for that matter.



### 9 FOOTPLANT OFF EVERYTHING

but we've got a magazine

nudge, nudge.

to produce, people! That kind

of stuff is reserved for gamers

with more time on their hands...

Footplants look cool. Even cooler than finger-flips, in our opinion. If you want to get tech, footplant off everything you can see. Rails, walls, objects – they're all there for the footplanting. Rumour has it you can even footplant off pedestrians – let us know if you have any luck!



### **SNAPS**

### SKATE.REEL SNAPS

Some of the pics users are uploading are fantastic, running the gambit from hilariously lewd to downright clever. Here are a few of our favourite so far.















# 

All the games that matter on PS3!

# WANTED

My precious...



#### BATMAN: **ARKHAM ASYLUM**

There are so many incarnations of Batman it's sometimes hard to keep track. This looks promising, based on the

comic books and combining combat with masked sleuthing, whilst many of the cast of the animated TV series lend voices, including Mark Hamill.



Yeah! PC stalwart Battlefield 1942 gets a PSN-ready spit and polish! Whether you battle in the trenches. in tanks or up in the air, as the Yanks or Japanese,

there'll hopefully be awesome action aplenty with up to 24 players going

### **DEAD RISING 2**

MMMmmm... zombie splattering action! Zombies are so 'it' right now that you call them the Paris Hiltons of the gaming world. Well, we could -and just did. The PS3 has shambling undead front. This one's going to fix all that.

**MININIAS** 

IO, maker of the Hitman and Kane & Lynch series, is getting in touch with its cuddly side somewhat with this 3D ninja romp. It may

not be as 'hardcore' as its previous hits, but it's still got ninjas being all stealthy and stuff, so we're keen to know more.

### **RED DEAD** REDEMPTION

Awright pardners! Last month we looked back at the PS2 treasure Red Dead Revolver, and expressed our hopes that chat of a PS3 sequel

wasn't just varmint talk. Just days after that issue hit the stands Rockstar confirmed it - aren't we durned good to you?!



The RPG version of Andrzei Sapkowski's epic world of monster slaying is being rebuilt from the ground up for consoles, and if it lives

up to even a modicum of the hype that's flying about it's going to knock a few socks off - or tights, gauntlets or whatever.

# SIMPLY THE BEST...

e best of the best of the best of the best



### GRAND THEFT AUTO IV

'GTAIV is a game 10 out of 10 was designed for - a game that takes your rising, constantly spiralling expectations and vapourises them with a product so sublime you'll tell your grandkids about it."

DEVELOPER: Rockstar North PUBLISHER: Rockstar PLAYERS: 1-16





"By rejigging the traditional platformer with physics and

an accessible level creator, LittleBigPlanet becomes something delightfully simple and postmodern - a game that everyone can play, and endlessly recreate.

**DEVELOPER:** Media Molecule PUBLISHER: Sony PLAYERS: 1-4





### MGS4: GUNS OF THE **PATRIOTS**

'An incredibly layered gaming experience that is

almost inexhaustible. Probably the best game available on the PlayStation 3, and definitely the best exclusive. Buy and play this videogame now."



### **UNCHARTED: DRAKE'S FORTUNE**

The only bad thing about it is it ends, but hot damn it takes you on a transcendentally enjoyable ride. There's no reason why you shouldn't buy this game.'

DEVELOPER: Naughty Dog PUBLISHER: Sony PLAYERS:



# **DEAD SPACE**

"The best survival horror title this generation - by an absolute country mile. Dead Space combines a smart

story with incredible visuals, sound design to create what is arguably the scariest video game ever made. A must-play on every possible level.

DEVELOPER: EA Redwood Shores PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS:





### **FALLOUT 3**

'Taking the solid base of Oblivion and placing into a post apocalyptic wasteland always sounded like a great

idea - and Fallout 3 proves that concept brilliantly. This is a game that will astound you with the sheer depth and enormity of it's incredible vision."

DEVELOPER: Rethesda PUBLISHER: Red Ant PLAYERS: 1







### **ASSASSIN'S** CREED

Assassin's Creed is a masterpiece, plain and simple. This game wouldn't

be better if Jesus Christ himself designed it. After Assassin's Creed, the world of videogaming seems like a different place."

**DEVELOPER:** Ubisoff Montreal PUBLISHER: Ubisoft PLAYERS: 1





### THE ELDER **SCROLLS IV: OBLIVION**

The first geniune classic next gen RPG. What Oblivion achieves is technically monstrous, to the extent that it can almost be overwhelming to most players. Even post-Fallout 3, this is a must play for RPG fans."

**DEVELOPER:** Bethesda **PUBLISHER:** Ubisoft PLAYERS: 1

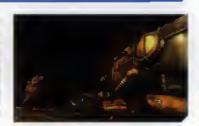






"Visually inconsistent, but it's difficult to criticise a game that attempts so much, and succeeds so often. Peerless in terms of size and scale, Resistance 2 provides a brilliantly rounded package for fans of first person shooters"

**DEVELOPER:** Insomniac **PUBLISHER:** Sony **PLAYERS:** 1-64



**BIOSHOCK** 

"As a sub-par port,

disappointment. BUT you'd be silly to

far. In many ways, this is a must play.

miss out on what is undoubtedly one of

the landmark games of this generation so

minus the promised extra

content, BioShock is a



### KILLZONE 2

"Visually Killzone 2 runs through the competition like a bull in the proverbial china shop. Lucky then, that the

game's design and story matches the lofty production values. *Killzone 2* is the first-person shooter evolved."

DEVELOPER: Guerrilla PUBLISHER: Sony PLAYERS: 1-16



DEVELOPER: 2K Marin PUBLISHER: 2K PLAYERS: 1





**CALL OF DUTY 4: MODERN WARFARE** 

"A fantastic shooter with a dizzying array of combat scenarios and packed with bleeding-edge military hardware. COD4 is one of the tightest shooters we've ever played."

DEVELOPER: Infinity Ward PUBLISHER: Activision PLAYERS: 1-16





### WARHAWK

"Tighter than a bull's arse on fight night and smoother than a glass of Guinness, Warhawk is a seriously

superior piece of software. Multiplayer only, but you'd be barking mad to miss it."

**DEVELOPER:** Incognito **PUBLISHER:** Sony **PLAYERS:** 1-32





### THE ORANGE BOX

"The Orange Box is ripe, in season, and packed with vitamin value. With

five quality titles, including the sublime *Portal*, there truly is something here for everybody. An unmissable package."

DEVELOPER: Valve PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS: 1-16





### BROTHERS IN ARMS: HELL'S HIGHWAY

"Momentarily plugging the huge gap left by Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare, Hell's Highway works by ploughing new ground as a shooter. Well-balanced squad mechanics are combined with real intensity and emotion."

**DEVELOPER:** Gearbox **PUBLISHER:** Ubisoft **PLAYERS:** 1-16





### BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY

"Taking destructability to a new insanely high level, Bad Company is a title unafraid

to push new ground. With some excellent characterisation, and some of the best multiplayer in the business, it's easily the best *Battlefield* title on console to date."

DEVELOPER: DICE PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS: 1-20





### FAR CRY 2

"At times overstretching itself, Far Cry 2's breath taking ambition can often be its undoing, but it's still

one of the best shooters out there. Plus, setting stuff on fire is still a ridiculous amount of fun.

**DEVELOPER:** Ubisoft Montreal **PUBLISHER:** Ubisoft **PLAYERS:** 1-16



# TOP 5

### **ACE GHWT DLC**

### 'BLACK BETTY'/ RAM JAM

Spiderbait's version of this African American work song was cool, but this one from the '70s is cooler 'cause, well, it rocks. And that's the point, isn't it? BAM BALAM!



### 'BORN TO RUN'/BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

Broooooce's acest ever track, and The Boss even let us snaffle it for free for a week or so – respect! If you missed out, it's worth paying for.



### 'JESSIE'S GIRL'/ RICK SPRINGFIELD

Get the riff in your head and it sticks. This is one ofthe better '80s throwbacks, even if Rick looked like a bit of a Jessie himself.



### 'MR BRIGHTSIDE'/ THE KILLERS

Well, 'Human' sucks, so this is the best option. We'd have much preferred the kicking 'All These Things That I've Done', but we seem to be the only ones who worship that one.



### **'OUTTATHAWAY!'/**THE VINES

We had to pick something Aussie, served up for Australia Day. Howsabout some truly classic Oz rock then, Activision guys? Cheers.



# 

All the games that matter on PS3!

### **MAGIC** MOMENTS



GAME: The Simpsons
CONSOLE: PS3 YEAR: 2007

THE MOMENT: There have almost been as many games based on The Simpsons as there have been years the show's been on our TV screens, and much like basically any episode since about the tenth season, they've all been various shades of cruddy.

The Simpsons Game rode a noxious cloud of Flanders-like highdiddilyhopes before it plopped into our laps with a self-satisfied squelchy sound, and mercifully went partway towards rectifying the franchise's standing in games history, which was more spotted than Mr Burns' body.

Sure, the graphics could look a bit odd at times, although the decision to keep the characters looking all kinda 2D-ish like their TV compatriots was a good one. And yeah, it often appeared as if Barney Gumble had been given camerawork duties as the player's view tended to swing around for no apparent reason just as you were lining up one of those hairy pixel-perfect preciso-jumps. But what made *The Simpsons Game* palatable was the writing - wicked, bitey, bitey sharp writing.

Right from the outset we were bombarded with great Simpsonic lines, but it wasn't until we entered the planetarium (or 'plane-arium' for South Park fans) that our jaws hit the ground. There we were innocently trundling about, as spurious sciencematific spacey facts bombarded us from a spot-on Harry Shearer impersonation of guy who is given much credit for popularising science with his TV show Cosmos, Frinkishly-brainy Muppet-voiced Carl Sagan. "This planet this, this planet that, that planet blahblahblah..." then, suddenly, "A belt of asteroids separates Saturn from Neptune. My belt separates my gut from my junk." And things just deteriorated gloriously from there! Ah, if only the TV show's writing still had the same bite then we'd be happy little Springfieldmites once again





"Pure shot straight from nowhere to rub MotorStorm's face in it's glorious graphics and watertight gameplay. It's not as varied as its main competitor, but damn does it play well."

DEVELOPER: Black Rock PUBLISHER: Funtastic PLAYERS: 1-16





### 5: PROLOGUE

'An anemic game package that somehow survives by being what is quite possibly

the greatest example of audio-visual excellence on the PlayStation 3 thus far. Well worth checking out."

DEVELOPER: Polyphony Digital PUBLISHER: Sony PLAYERS: 1-16







# **COLIN MCRAE:**

"The great man rests in peace, but his legacy lives on with this stellar racer

that brilliantly bridges the seemingly inpenetrable gap between arcade and sim. A seamlessly presented title that juggles depth and accessibility with a precise gusto.

DIRT

**DEVELOPER:** Codemasters **PUBLISHER:** Atari PLAYERS: 1-16





# To appreciate Sega Rally

you'll have to continually remind yourself that it's a deceptively life-

like caricature of a hardcore rallying experience. Not brain surgery, but it delivers the fun in big muddy spades."

**DEVELOPER:** Sega Driving Studio PUBLISHER: Sega PLAYERS: 1-6



9



### **RACE DRIVER** GRID

"This bastard rock n' roll son of V8 Supercars and Colin McRae: DiRT is hot. Your

lower jaw will relax. Your eyelids will take five. And you'll start to drool. Shame it ditched its sim roots, but the V8 DLC has us all a quiver.'





### **FERRARI CHALLENGE**

Ferrari Challenge will surprise you by being that little bit better than you

thought it could ever be. A hardcore racing sim that thrives on the details, this is a suitable title to fend off the petrol heads until Gran Turismo 5 arrives to rewrite the racing handbook.

**DEVELOPER:** System 3 **PUBLISHER:** Red Ant PLAYERS: 1-16





### MOTORSTORM

In our humble opinion MotorStorm was the best launch title on the fledgling PS3 - and arguably it's

one of the greatest launch titles of all time. Defining next gen racing as a platform upon which smart AI and terrain deformation could thrive, MotorStorm reinvented the arcade racer

**DEVELOPER:** Evolution Studios PUBLISHER: Sony PLAYERS: 1-16





### **MIDNIGHT CLUB: LOS ANGELES**

Within its niche sub-genre, Midnight Club: Los Angeles reigns supreme. With well designed, rolling objectives, and an insane amount of customisation, MC: LA manages to rise above the rabble, easily beating off Need for Speed Undercover at its own game.

**DEVELOPER:** Rockstar San Diego **PUBLISHER:** Rockstar **PLAYERS:** 1-16





### BURNOUT **PARADISE**

"You'll lament the thoughtless removal of splitscreen and the lack of

a retry button, but you'll marvel at the slick frame rate, the sun drenched city, and Criterion's stellar commitment to free downloadable content. Awesome.

**DEVELOPER:** Criterion PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS: 1-16







"A triumph. Harmonix has found the formula for a truly great music game - immaculate presentation, great tunes and a job for as many of your friends as possible. You wanted the best, you got the best."

**DEVELOPER:** Harmonix **PUBLISHER:** EA **PLAYERS:** 1-4





SKATE) Fight Night Round 3 is perhaps

FIGHT NIGHT

"Featuring a dual analogue

control system (that paved the way for the sublime

ROUND 3





### **TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 09**

'Golf, for most of the populace, is about as exciting as watching paint

dry in an old folk's home, so it's testament to EA that this game actually works well."

DEVELOPER: FA **PUBLISHER: EA** PLAYERS: 1-16





### SKATE 2

Despite some frame rate issues, SKATE 2 is sundoubtedly one of the greatest sports game's ever

conceived. The controls are flawless, the city is dense, the balance is sublime.

DEVELOPER: EA Black Box PUBLISHER: EA





### FIFA 09

"With it's new momentum physics, stellar visuals, and engaging gameplay, 2009 is finally the year that the FIFA

franchise manages to leap the perennial hurdle that is Pro Evolution Soccer. Now Konami have to play catch up.

**DEVELOPER:** EA Canada PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS: 1-20





"It's a tough call - GHWT blitzes Rock Band in terms of equipment, but struggles to match up to its sublime functionality. Still, it's an unmissable multiplayer experience."

**DEVELOPER:** Neversoft **PUBLISHER:** Activision **PLAYERS:** 1-4



### **NBA 2K9**

"Basketball's hardly the national sport of Australia, but that doesn't mean that the game can't be

fun. This is a decent representation of Barack Obama's favourite sport, Fans of basketball should check this out.

VIRTUA

Virtua Tennis, to this day, still remains

unchallenged for the title of best tennis

**TENNIS 3** 

Still one of the few titles

that manages to pull off true

1080p high definition visuals,

DEVELOPER: 2K PUBLISHER: 2K PLAYERS: 1-10

game ever made.



### MADDEN NFL 09

'Despite being in the doldrums for the past couple of years, this year's Madden does a good job

of scrambling back out. In terms of presentation this is a big leap from last year's effort, which struggled on the PS3."

DEVELOPER: EA Tiburon PUBLISHER: EA PLAYERS: 1-4





### **SINGSTAR**

'Take Singstar for what it is: a sublimely developed party game that cruelly exploits drunken girls and deludes

them into believing they are 'Singstars' Perfectly presented, and endlessly fun post-booze-fest."

DEVELOPER: Sony PUBLISHER: Sony PLAYERS: 1-4



# TOP 5

### KICK ARSE **PS3 GALS**

### **CHUN LI**

For somebody who's the grandmother of all rectum-booting XX chromosomers, spring beauty Chun-Li is still amazingly spring chicken. Must be all the herbal tea



### **FAITH**

She runs, she jumps, she fights, she vaults, she climbs, she slides, she shoots, she tumbles - she's a super-hot Super Mario without the plumber's crack



Some may suggest she's as much a floatation device as a fighter, but in reply Ivy would politely - or not so much - suggest that you feel the icky end of her snake sword.



#### NARIKO

Wielding the morphing triple-weapon heavenly sword, mess with Nariko and you're begging for a one way ticket to a cemetery. Still, some may argue, what a way to go!



### RACHEL

Call this pneumatic hunter of fiends a bimbo and she'll smash you so hard with her war hammer that you'll have to list yourself as a pancake on the next census



DEVELOPER: SEGA **PUBLISHER: SEGA** PLAYERS: 1-4



# FAMOUS



DRIVER

Cut to the chase, as they say...

ack in the late '90s, tucked away in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Reflections Interactive was beavering away on a follow-up to its work on the Destruction Derby series for now-defunct publisher GT Interactive. The game was Driver, and GT Interactive was so impressed it simply bought the company.

True story.

Driver was a watershed product. Sliding behind the wheel of a slate of '70s muscle cars as undercover cop Tanner, it was your job to lay rubber across four US cities - Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York - in your crusade against organised crime. The attention to detail was astonishing at the time. The large cities, the funk soundtrack, the all-American V8s. the flying hub caps - everything about this game was designed to emulate genredefining car chase classics like Bullitt, Vanishing Point and Walter Hill's (The Warriors, Last Man Standing) The Driver. It was the latter, in fact, that was most influential on the game. Most notably, the scene in the movie where the Driver proves his skills to some gangsters in a parking garage is lifted wholesale for the first level of the game. Reflections apparently even went as far as to use the car crash sounds used in the movie.

Driver was a critical and commercial hit, earning gallons of praise and going on to sell more than six million copies which,

in the sometimes murky world of sale charts, generally places it at number nine on the list of all-time best-selling games for the original PlayStation – a remarkable achievement considering over 4000 games were released on the console.

We do, however, wonder how many of those six million gamers finished the game. 'The President's Run', the final mission in the game, remains a yardstick for difficulty spikes and borders on impossible. Finishing *Driver*, then, without the invincibility cheat is true test of skill and an indication of gamer balls the size of rockmelons.

Play it today and you'll realise it hasn't aged well - pop-up is an absolute dog, and the frame rate isn't exactly buttery smooth. But that's now. Back in 1998 Driver was an absolute revelation. Up until Driver, dynamic car chases across completely 3D cities had never been done. Driver brought the car chase, for decades exclusively the domain of Hollywood, to games. It even featured a film director mode, where you could not only re-live your high-speed pursuit in a replay, but also place your own cameras and construct a custom silver-screen-style car chase. Driver, as a result, played an extremely key role in defining what we expect from open-world games, and was a game far ahead of its time.

Luke Reilly





PlayStation

CONSOLE: PLAYSTATION

DEVELOPER: REFLECTIONS
INTERACTIVE
COUNTRY OF
ORIGIN: UK
CURRENT APPROXIMATE
PRICE: \$10 (EBAY)

4

# DROPPING THE BALL



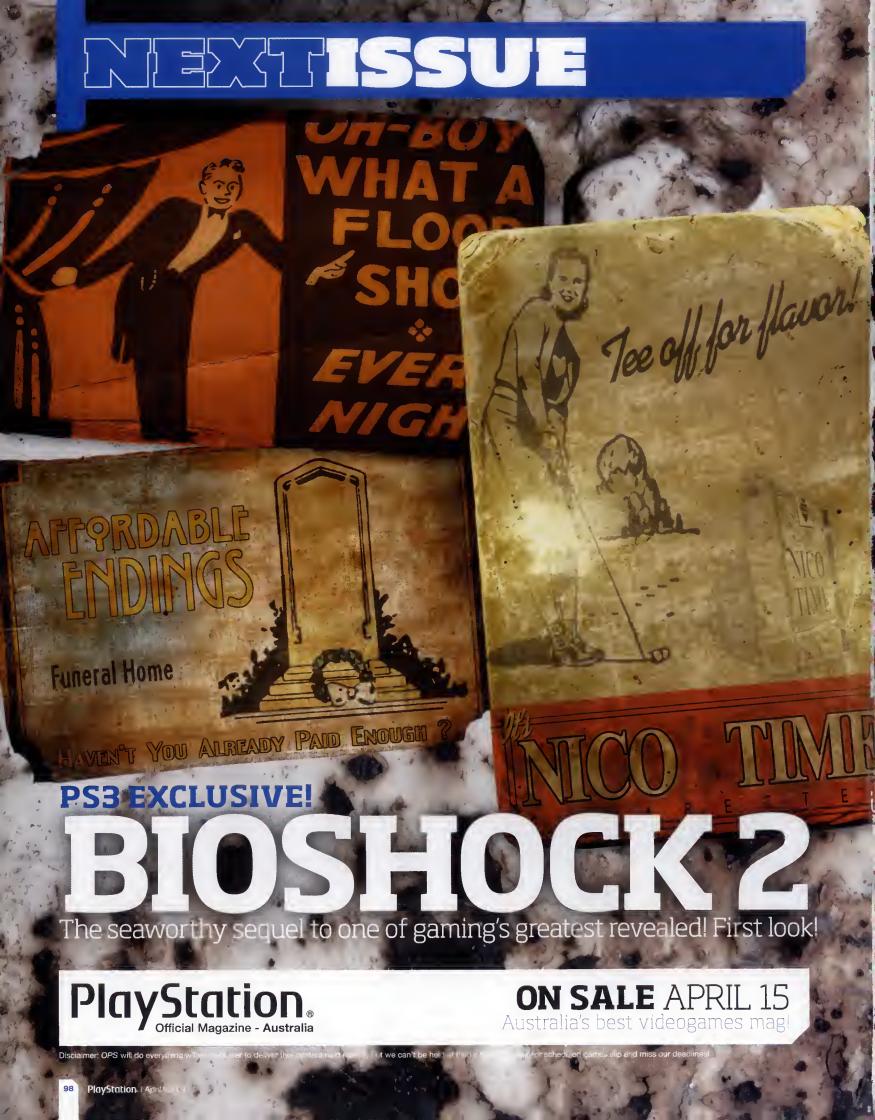
Driver remains the best-selling game in the Driver series, and Reflections has since failed to live up to the expectation-smashing success of the original. The mixed critical reaction for Driver 2 surprised us (In our opinion it was a wildly ambitious and killer title a GTAIII a generation before its time), but the public flogging of the disappointing Driv3r didn't. Was Driv3r really as bad as many maintain it was, or was it a mediocre game brought down by the weight of its hype? That's a discussion for another month.



MAKE

SALE NOW!





# QUANTUM OF SOLACE

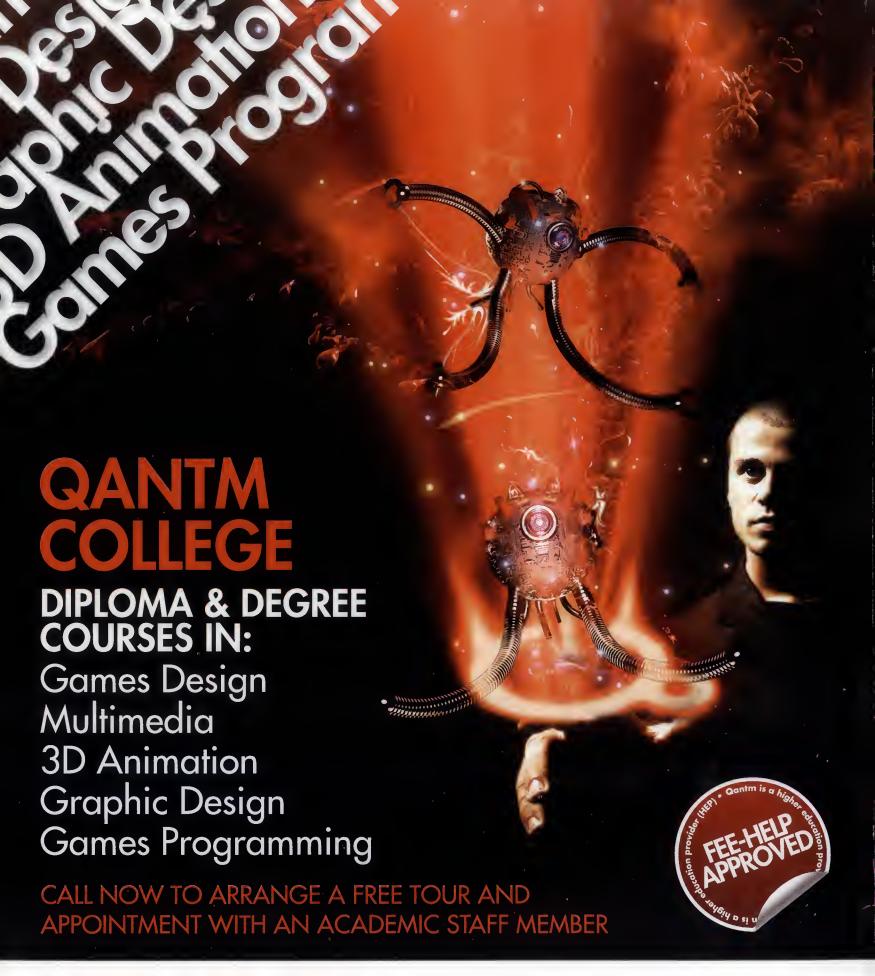


OUT NOW

OWN THE
THRILLING RCTION
OND AND ELU-RAY







1300 136 933

WWW.QANTM.COM.AU

Brisbane | Sydney | Melbourne

Qantm CRICOS Codes- 02689A (QLD), 02852F (NSW), 02837E (VIC)



